THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE MEDICI

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

CORREGGIO
THE RENAISSANCE IN ITALIAN ART
THE RENAISSANCE: FLORENCE, 1450–1550
BARTOLOZZI AND HIS PUPILS IN ENGLAND
VENICE, PAST AND PRESENT

260

THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE MEDICI

(COSIMO, PIERO, LORENZO DE' MEDICI)

1434-1494

J. F. McCarthy

BY

SELWYN BRINTON, M.A., F.R.S.A.
BARRISTER-AT-LAW

Dianomowa
To
Wit cousin

WITH THIRTY-THREE ILLUSTRATIONS

METHUEN & CO. LTD.
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.
LONDON

First Published in 1925

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

B77

TO
MY WIFE

PREFACE

IN presenting to the reader this study of a period which has been already treated by various writers, and to which I have myself contributed in the past, I wish to make two points specially clear. The first is that this is not a specifically art work ; although the art creation of that wonderful time does enter very freely into its pages. That art has been carefully and systematically analyzed by critics of the highest standing, though I do not by any means admit that the last word has yet been spoken ; and in my own " Medici at Florence " I have sought in some measure to cover not alone this, but the later developments of art in Florence. In the period before us here I am treating of the earlier Medici, of that family of Merchant Princes who ruled the destinies of Florence more precisely from Cosimo's triumphant return, in 1434, to his great-grandson Piero's ignominous exit in 1494—that is throughout the sixty greatest years of Florentine story ; and I treat the art of the time in its connection with this family, either directly when, as so often happened, they were actual patrons of the craftsmen and painters, or indirectly, as these were affected in varying measures by their protection or influence.

Yet even with this limitation what a magnificent field is here opened before us ! These sixty years were the true " golden age " of Tuscan art and scholarship ; and even if the soil was prepared—as Sismondi will have it—under the long preceding hegemony of the Albizzi, even if the

praises of Guicciardini, as I suggest later, may have been partly meant as a foil to the years of bloodshed and disorder which fill his annals, yet this remains the golden time of Florence—in its narrower limits from the death of Sixtus IV and the secured position of Lorenzo de' Medici as peacemaker throughout Italy, in its wider and fuller extent from the return of Cosimo to the death of the Magnificent—this the *età d'oro*, introduced appropriately by himself in his " Selve d'Amore," and invoked, with no less beauty of diction, by the Muse of his friend and fellow-poet, Angelo Poliziano.

The difficulty which at once meets the writer in treating this subject and period is to avoid becoming, to a less or greater extent, a partisan ; for the issues involved are so absorbing, so intimately connected with even our present life, that they call to us temperamentally, and, even with the best intentions, it is hard to avoid taking a side. There are certain great movements in the story of nations, certain currents and counter-currents—here sweeping out triumphantly into the sunlight, fresh with vitalizing air, there caught back into the hidden depths, perilous waters, far beneath the surface—which attract us so immensely that hardly can we escape their claim. Instinctively, inevitably, without willing or even knowing it, we find ourselves too drawn into the current, and, before we are aware of it, we cease to be spectators of the wonderful game ; this, surely, because the issues there presented are so vital, go so deep into the very inmost tissues of our being that they not merely seem to be, but are real to us to-day, because they never have—nor perhaps ever could have—really ceased to exist.

Such movements in history are those of the long drawn out struggle—framed in the slow agony of the Roman State—between beautiful decaying Paganism and the

vitalizing forces of nascent Christianity; or, again, in our own island story, the contest for civil and religious liberty, or, in the century following, the Revolution of France. Such, too, in Italy of the Renaissance, were the great issues which in old Florence found their battle-cry in the magic words of "*Palle*" or of "*Popolo e Libertà*"; and as in declining Rome there stand out the figures of the great Stoic teachers or the Fathers of the early Church, in Paris of the Revolution the threatening forms of Danton, Robespierre and Marat, so too in this decisive moment of Florentine story two personalities emerge, facing each other on the stage of history, incarnations of two opposing principles, two different theories of life—the brilliant statesman, poet and scholar, and the great Dominican preacher of repentance.

Of course, one way out of this difficulty above mentioned is to become—like Roscoe in his monumental work, or (as I venture to think) Colonel G. F. Young in our own times—frankly *Pallesco*, to take definitely the Medicean standpoint; and I will confess that, commencing this work myself with, if anything, Republican sympathies and a critical mind towards "Casa Medici," I have found myself, while seeking always to preserve my independence of judgment, by degrees gradually drawn nearer to their side. For the Medici princes of this wonderful *cinque-cento* are often so absolutely modern in their outlook; already they seem to sympathize with and understand the very things that now claim our love and admiration. In an age of horrible barbarity (even, if not more so, within Italy herself), of torture of unhappy prisoners, of ghastly vendettas, they really seem to have some respect for human life and suffering (for neither the fate of the Pazzi conspirators nor the sack of Volterra can fairly be laid to their charge), and prefer to make use of the

milder, if not less exasperating, weapons of exile and taxation.

And their patronage of art and scholarship remains something unique and wonderful. There has been nothing quite like it in the world; and perhaps there never will be again. For it is not with them merely the munificent patron or ruler, the rich and discriminating collector, the Mæcenas of art and letters, the Pierpont Morgan of the *cinque-cento:* far more than this, their point of view is that of the friend and intimate of the great sculptor-architects and painters—the ripe scholar who has himself drunk deep from the pure founts of ancient learning, himself climbed to the stars at Plato's side—or, yet again, the poet and fellow-votary of the reawakened Tuscan Muse. As such it is scarcely possible to overstate the debt which Florence and the world (this very world in which we live) has owed to these three great Medici Merchant Princes, father, son and grandson—for between Cosimo and Lorenzo, Piero fairly claims his place in the great tradition; and it is with the object of thus bringing them together, of tracing that influence upon art and thought and Italian story, that I shall here again turn back a wonderful page of history, whose interest is not yet—and perhaps never will be—really exhausted.

SELWYN BRINTON

SEPTEMBER, 1925

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	PREFACE	v
CHAPTER		
I.	THE ADVENT OF CASA MEDICI	1
II.	THE HUMANISTS AT FLORENCE	21
III.	GHIBERTI AND BRUNELLESCHI	42
IV.	DONATO, DELLA ROBBIA, MICHELOZZO	61
V.	COSIMO PATER PATRIÆ	78
VI.	THE SPRINGTIME RETURNS	100
VII.	THE CONSPIRACY OF THE PAZZI	122
VIII.	THE MEDICI AS PATRONS OF PAINTING	151
IX.	LORENZO AND THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE	173
X.	THE FALL OF CASA MEDICI	202
	INDEX	231

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1.	THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI KINGS . . . (With Portraits of the Medici.) By Sandro Botticelli.	*Frontispiece*
2.	THE PALACE AND PIAZZA OF THE SIGNORIA OF FLORENCE	*Facing Page* 1
3.	ARMS OF THE GUILDS OF FLORENCE . . . . By Luca della Robbia.	8
4.	THE MEDICI PALACE AT FLORENCE	10
5.	GATE OF FLORENTINE BAPTISTERY . . . . (Story of Old Testament.) By Lorenzo Ghiberti.	50
6.	CREATION, TEMPTATION AND EXPULSION FROM PARADISE. ABRAHAM AND ISAAC . . . . . (Panels.) By Lorenzo Ghiberti. (*Photo: Brogi, Florence.*)	52
7.	THE CUPOLA OF FLORENCE DUOMO . . . . By Filippo Brunelleschi.	56
8.	THE CHAPEL OF THE PAZZI . . . . . By Filippo Brunelleschi.	58
9.	CRUCIFIX CARVED IN WOOD . . . . . By Filippo Brunelleschi.	60
10.	CANTORIA WITH DANCING CHILDREN . . . . By Donatello. (*Photo: Brogi, Florence.*)	62
11.	DAVID TRIUMPHANT OVER GOLIATH . . . . By Donatello. (Bronze.) (*Photo: Brogi, Florence.*)	64
12.	ST. GEORGE . . . . . (In marble.) By Donatello. (*Photo: Brogi, Florence.*)	66
13.	ST. LAWRENCE . . . . . (Terra-cotta bust.) By Donatello.	68
14.	ORGAN-LOFT OF FLORENCE DUOMO . . . . (Panel-Children making music.) By Luca della Robbia.	70
15.	THE VISITATION . . . . . By Luca della Robbia.	72
16.	CAPITAL AND DETAIL OF CORNICE . . . . By Michelozzo.	74
17.	FALCON: EMBLEM OF PIERO DE MEDICI . . . By Michelozzo.	76
18.	THE ANNUNCIATION . . . . . By Andrea della Robbia. (*Photo: Brogi, Florence.*)	88
19.	THE BIRTH OF VENUS . . . . . By Sandro Botticelli. (*Photo: Anderson, Rome.*)	114
20.	PRIMAVERA (SPRING) . . . . . By Sandro Botticelli. (*Photo: Brogi, Florence.*)	116

Facing Page

21. SIXTUS IV RECEIVING PLATINA 124
(With portraits of the Pope's nephews.) By Melozzo da Forli.

22. S. PETER BY HIS SHADOW HEALING THE SICK . . 154
By Masaccio.

23. THE CRUCIFIXION, WITH ADORING SAINTS . . . 160
By Fra Angelico. (*Photo: Brogi, Florence.*)

24. THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI KINGS 162
(With portraits of the Medici.) By Benozzo Gozzoli. (*Photo: Brogi, Florence.*)

25. THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI KINGS 164
(With portrait of Lorenzo the Magnificent.) By Benozzo Gozzoli.

26. ZACHARIAS AND THE ANGEL 166
(With portraits of the Humanists.) By Domenico Ghirlandajo.

27. VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH ANGELS 168
(Called the Madonna of the Magnificat.) By Sandro Botticelli.

28. THE SLEEPING MARS AND VENUS 170
By Sandro Botticelli. (*Photo: D. Macbeth.*)

29. PALLAS AND THE CENTAUR 172
By Sandro Botticelli. (*Photo: Brogi, Florence.*)

30. LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT 194
By Giorgio Vasari.

31. THE MEDICI VILLA AT CAREGGI 200
By Michelozzo.

32. FRA GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA 212

Note.—Except where otherwise acknowledged the illustrations are from photographs by Alinari, Florence.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE MEDICI

THE PALACE AND PIAZZA OF THE SIGNORIA OF FLORENCE

THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE MEDICI

CHAPTER I

THE ADVENT OF CASA MEDICI

IN the study of Florence in her greatest creative period, in that "golden age" of her story which is my subject here, it is important, even necessary, to go back to her origin. Villani, in his "History of Florence," has shown how the city was a Roman Municipium, which had suffered under Sulla, and been restored probably by Augustus. The colony of Julia Augusta Florentia had its Capitol on the site later of S. Maria del Campidoglio, its Forum where stood the Mercato Vecchio—destroyed, within my own knowledge, to the loss of much that was interesting and picturesque, and where Roman remains had been found—and contained a theatre, an amphitheatre (traces near the Borgo dei Greci), a temple of Isis (its site occupied by S. Firenze) and baths in the street still known as Via delle Terme.

This Roman city must have suffered terribly under the savage invasion of the Longobardi; so that from 570 onwards we have two centuries of utter darkness, until Charlemagne defeated the Lombard power for ever, and made halt in Florence, celebrating there the Christmas

of 786. Then, gradually, through all that mediæval conflict of city with city, of Church with Empire, this free city of Florence asserts herself, attacks the nobles who from the castles in the *contado* without plunder her commerce, takes Prato and (in 1125) the hill-city of Fiesole, which is put to sack—here, too, the grievance being that Florentine traders had been plundered. Slowly, through this troubled time, the constitution of Florence is evolving itself, and becomes so important, so complex, but so close to our subject that we cannot pass it over; from the death of the great Countess Matilda onwards the city is already a living thing, a political organism, struggling—often vainly enough—to develop itself, to express its conscious powers.

But the broad facts to remember are that Florence, like Venice, remains always Roman in her municipal tradition. Hence she first makes war on the nobles in the *contado* without, of foreign—German or Lombard—origin. Then, between 1200–1260, she takes her place at the head of the League of Tuscan cities against the Ghibellines, formally adopting the Guelph cause as that of municipal liberty against "Ghibellinism"—the rule of the few against the many, the interest of the noble against the citizen, the feudal spirit against that of freedom. Hence the "Ordinances of Justice," designed to crush out Ghibellinism within her walls, the Gonfaloniere of Justice, his mission to carry out this penal code, and the College of the *Parte Guelfa*—whose noble Palace has been recently restored to house the excellent Vieusseux Library. The function of this College of the Guelph Party was to administer the forfeited possessions of Ghibelline nobles, to hunt out citizens suspect of Ghibellinism, and punish them as traitors to the State. Hence its political power was enormous: for by "admonition," by warning a citizen

that he was suspect and had better not use his vote, it could render its enemies voiceless, and control the votes of the Signory.

The turning-point, therefore, in this evolution of the Republic of Florence is the year 1292, when, as Varchi tells us in his "Storia Fiorentina" (Lib. III)—"the people overcame the nobles (*grandi*) and passed the 'Ordinances of Justice' against them, whereby no noble could exercise any magistracy; so that such of the patricians as desired to be able to hold office had to enter the ranks of the people (as did many great houses of quality), and matriculate into one of the Arts. The Arts were these: (1) Judges and Notaries. (2) The Art of Cloth-weaving (Calimala). (3) Exchange. (4) Wool. (5) Silk. (6) Physicians and Apothecaries. (7) Furriers." These were called the Greater Arts; but besides these were the Lesser Arts—those of the Butchers, Shoemakers, Linen-drapers, Vintners, Innkeepers, Carpenters, Bakers, etc., making twenty-one Arts in all. Each of these Arts had its own mansion, where its members assembled, appointed their officers, and gave account of debit and credit to members of the Guild.

Two points of first importance for my readers to grasp in this constitution of the old Republic are, firstly, the fact that the word *Popolo*, that watchword of Florentine freedom, by no means connotes the whole of the citizens: it refers to those burghers only who had from the first claimed, and had eventually obtained, the coveted privilege of citizenship. The distinction is essential to Italian politics, and we shall see later how intimately connected is this question of the unenfranchised citizens with the influence of the Medici. The other point to be remembered is the supreme importance to Florence of that centre and symbol of civic life, the Palace of the

Signoria. Here the Supreme Magistracy dwelt, who guarded her liberties and wielded her power, never leaving its walls during their term of office : they were the eight Priors, the Gonfaloniere of Justice and those of the Companies of the People, the twelve *Buoni Uomini* or special advisers of the Signory—united to form the *Collegio*. The grand old mediæval building, with its lofty tower, imposes itself yet upon our imagination, looking sternly over the sunny Piazza crowded on market-day with country folk ; but in those old days it was Florence herself, the centre of her being, the symbol of her presence and power. So that we shall find again and again, in her troubled story, that the first object of any conspirator, be he popular or Medicean, is to get fairly inside the Palace, and to hold it fast ; if he does that successfully the rest seems plain-sailing ; if he fails—he knows the fate that waits him swiftly.

We have, therefore, as the machinery of government, the *Collegio* of the Signory, living night and day within the Palace of the Republic ; the *Parlamento*—the gathering of all citizens in the Piazza of the Signory, to hear and vote upon the proposals of government ; the *Balia*, a select committee then nominated, to carry out any proposals there formulated ; and lastly the *Accopiatori*, delegated by the *Balia* with part of its functions, especially as to nominations for office and control of the electoral boxes. All these formed different parts of a State machine, carefully and jealously designed with a series of checks, to prevent any possible usurpation of public authority.

The *Parlamento* and *Balia* was therefore a powerful machine, which, apparently giving expression to the will of the assembled people, could be easily perverted for personal vengeance ; and as such was used by and

against the Medici in different moments of the story which we have now to trace. We have seen that the nobles had been excluded from magistracy within Florence ; and at this time the rich families from the *Popolo*, the so-called *nobili popolani*, who were now in power with the Albizzi at their head, still used the Law of Admonitions to prevent any new family entering their close Guelph oligarchy. Against this oligarchy were now grouped the families of the Ricci, Strozzi, Alberti, who had arrived later, and with them the Medici, who at this time come into political significance. In 1378 Salvestro de' Medici, then holding office as Gonfaloniere, proposed to abolish the Law of Admonitions. Finding his proposal rejected by the College of the Signory he appealed to the Council of the People, and later to the people themselves ; and his proposal was then carried by a large majority.

" Let no one," said Machiavelli, " who raises popular commotions imagine that he can afterwards control them at his pleasure. . . . Salvestro intended to enact his law and compose the city—but it befell otherwise." For behind his fair and moderate proposal lay the intense, and almost inarticulate, craving of the lower classes at Florence for political expression in an extended franchise.

The rising of the *Ciompi*—the workers in the woollen trade, that great industry of old Florence, who were at that time left entirely out of the franchise—has been called a contest between the proletariat and the middle classes : for the people themselves, having once felt their power, were not inclined to stop half-way. Their proposal, which seems to us reasonable enough, was rejected by the Signory, who, determined to crush the movement, arrested one of its leaders, and put him to the torture—then the usual and horrible method of examination. By this action they put a lighted match to the mine

which now exploded under their feet. The people flew to arms, with the *Ciompi* at their head. They besieged (July 22nd, 1378) the Palace of the Podestà, and took it the day following. They next attacked and captured the Palace of the Signory itself: at their head marched a wool-carder, Michele Lando, carrying the Gonfalone, the Standard of the Republic, which he had seized in the Podesta's Palace—and suddenly the excited crowd acclaimed as their Gonfaloniere.

The movement was crushed, after its brief movement of success; and the oligarchy of the *nobili popolani* re-established yet more firmly. But it is not, I think, too much to say that this was really a step backward; and that had the just demands of these workers been considered more evenly the history of Florence might have been very different. As it was a feeling of resentment remained, a rankling sore of the body politic, which was only too likely to find later expression or outlet; and this feeling it is important to our special subject to note here, in its influence on the future of the "Casa Medici."

For the Medici had been the helpers of the people in their effort to obtain political recognition It was Salvestro de' Medici, Gonfaloniere of the Republic in 1378, who had appealed to the people, and by their support had suspended the "law of admonition" which the Albizzi, at the head of a narrow Guelph oligarchy, were using to prevent the entry of any new family, any *novus homo*, into their ruling group. It was Salvestro again who, after the collapse of the *Ciompi* movement, found himself at the head of the State, with an Alberti and Scali as his colleagues; and Sismondi remarks of these three men that "although belonging themselves to the aristocracy, they were the enemies of their order." It is true that the great Florentine House of the Albizzi

soon climbed back to power, and no less true that the oligarchy they dominated ruled the Republic for the space of fifty-three years, from 1381 to 1434, with conspicuous ability and brilliant success ; that they developed the resources and increased the territory of the Republic, opposed successfully the dangerous supremacy of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, and by the conquest of Pisa gave Florence a much-needed access to the sea.

" No triumph of an aristocratic faction "—writes the author of the " History of the Italian Republics," " ever merited a more brilliant place in history. It was the most prosperous epoch of the Republic—that during which its opulence acquired the greatest development—that in which the arts, sciences and literature adopted Florence as their native country—that in which were born and formed all those great men of whom the Medici, their contemporaries, have reaped the glory without having any share in producing them—that finally, in which the Republic most constantly followed the noblest policy, considering itself as the guardian of the liberty of Italy. . . . And yet," adds the same author, " the name of Cosimo de' Medici is alone mentioned by posterity, and the Albizzi are forgotten ; because we are more attracted by the splendour which surrounds a great name than by the power from which its greatness draws its source."

But Sismondi, with all his devotion to the cause of civic liberty, can yet appreciate the great and exceptional intellectual qualities possessed of Cosimo de' Medici ; and through all the brilliant period of Albizzi domination the people of Florence had never forgotten that the Medici had been in old days on their side in their struggle for political justice, a fact which Cosimo himself, when he came into political life, was probably far too astute a politician ever to let out of his own memory.

His father, Giovanni de' Medici, better known as Giovanni de' Bicci, had—perha pswisely during this period of Albizzi domination—preferred to stand aside from public life; but had increased the family resources by his financial abilities and success. In 1402 he was elected by his Guild of the Bankers—the *Arte del Cambio*—as its *Priore*, which brought him into the Government; and he was re-elected in 1406 and 1411. He had been one of the judges for the famous competition for the bronze doors for the Baptistery of San Giovanni: and had freely used his great wealth during the terrible plague of 1417 to help the suffering of his fellow-citizens.[1]

When Giovanni de' Bicci died, in 1428, leaving a very large fortune to his two sons, Cosimo and Lorenzo, and a record of sound and unobtrusive public work and generosity which had strengthened the position of Casa Medici, the eldest of those sons, Cosimo, was forty and already one of the leading citizens of Florence. He had married Contessina de' Bardi, from the great family of Florentine bankers, who then owned the Via dei Bardi. Educated at the Academy of the Convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli, founded by Ambrogio Traversari for the study of Greek and Latin, Cosimo was a scholar and linguist with some competent knowledge of Greek, Latin and even Hebrew, while his love for learning and art were lifelong passions. Endowed with exceptional abilities, and now, on his father's death, one of the wealthiest men in Flor-

[1] "Not a man of great eloquence," said Machiavelli, "but of extraordinary prudence. He never sought the honours of government, yet enjoyed them all." At his life's end the advice he is said to have given to his sons seems to reflect this character. "I die content, for I leave you rich and well, so placed that if you follow the course which I have followed you will live respected and in favour with all men. I am cheered by the thought that I have never wilfully offended anyone, but have sought to do good to all. . . . Although among so many enemies, and surrounded by so many conflicting interests, I have not only maintained my reputation but increased it."

ence, it was soon felt that he was a force in the Republic which had to be counted with.

On the other hand, the power of the Albizzi was beginning to decline. To their great leader, Maso degli Albizzi, had succeeded his son Rinaldo, less balanced, more arrogant and impetuous ; both he and the party of nobles, the *grandi* whom he led, saw in Cosimo a dangerous opponent, and resolved to crush him and his whole family before they became stronger. This decision went against the advice of old Niccolo da Uzzano, Maso's contemporary and friend, who told them that if the trial of strength were made he believed that the Medici would win ; but that if they succeeded in putting Cosimo to death Florence might then have Rinaldo as her despot, and that of the two he would prefer Cosimo—adding that he prayed God to deliver his city from any private usurpation.

This advice, coming from one whose age and high standing placed him at the head of the *nobili*, could not be altogether passed by ; and Cosimo, left for the moment in peace, interested himself in these years, from 1430 onwards, in building a new palace for his family, in the Via Larga, at the corner of this " wide street " and the Via de' Gori—that palace which is still one of the most impressive monuments of Florence. He had intended here to employ the services of his friend, the great sculptor-architect, Filippo Brunelleschi : but prudently considering the design of this latter as too grandiose, and calculated to stir up envy, he preferred the plainer one proffered by Michelozzo—and the near future showed here, too, his wisdom. This is that wonderful Palace of Art of which I shall come to speak later in detail ; and which even now, though changed in name and robbed of most of its treasures, wins our most enthusiastic approval.

The Cortile—adorned with medallions, imitated from the antique gems of the Medici collection by Donatello's genius, which still remain to our delight—is beautifully designed. Among the ornaments of the Palace, and designed to stand in this Cortile, were the beautiful bronze *David*, now in the Museo Nazionale, and the bronze group of *Judith and Holofernes*, transferred later to the Loggia dei Lanzi, both by Donatello's hand; and under Cosimo's son, Piero il Gottoso, Benozzo Gozzoli was to adorn the chapel with frescoes unique in their decorative beauty, while over the altar stood Fra Lippo's delightful *Nativity*.

Then suddenly the blow fell—the attack on Cosimo and his whole house, which had been never abandoned, but only deferred. Niccolo da Uzzano had died in 1432, and, with his wise restraining influence removed, the Albizzi resolved upon immediate action, apparently aiming at nothing less than the death of Cosimo himself and the banishment, and consequent ruin, of his whole family. In 1433 the Albizzi had the Signoria under their influence, and brought an accusation against Cosimo for aiming to set himself above other citizens, pointing to his new Palace as evidence for their charge. Cosimo was summoned to present himself at the Palace of the Signory, and to give account of his conduct. He obeyed this order —perhaps with more courage than prudence; for on entering the Palace he found himself suddenly arrested, and imprisoned within a cell in the tower. Then the people were summoned to *Parlamento* by the tolling of the great bell of the Signoria tower.

There can be no doubt that these next days were the most terribly critical and anxious of Cosimo's whole life. His enemies had him at their mercy, and, fearing the temper of the people, whose attachment to the Medici

THE MEDICI PALACE AT FLORENCE

By Michelozzo Michelozzi

was known, they seem to have even thought of poison. Cosimo, in any case, especially feared this, and for three days would touch no food; but he had the fortune to find a friendly jailer, Malavolti, who reassured him by himself first partaking of the food; and through this man he was able to transfer a sum of money, which he had been able to keep, to his judge. The result was seen when, at the trial, his sentence, instead of death, was ten years of banishment at Padua; while his brother Lorenzo escaped with five years at Venice, and the Medici family suffered in a like manner.

Cosimo had escaped, cast out of Florence, escorted by a guard to her frontiers; but it was soon felt what the city had lost. "He took," it was said, "a part of Florence with him." The work on his Palace was, of course, brought to a standstill, Michelozzo accompanying him in his exile, while Donatello, unwilling to remain, left for Rome to study the antiques of that city. Rinaldo degli Albizzi, left in power, reverted to his narrow policy of weakening the political position of the "Lesser Arts" and people, so as to strengthen the hands of the *grandi*—a policy which aroused the bitter resentment of the people, who remembered that Casa Medici had always been their friend. The reaction was already preparing, and came even sooner than might have been anticipated. Within a year, in September of 1434, a new Signoria had been drawn, with Niccolo Donati as President, and entirely favourable to Cosimo.

A *Parlamento* was hastily summoned, and the *Balia* appointed unanimously decreed that Cosimo and his friends should be recalled, and his place in exile taken by Rinaldo degli Albizzi. The latter is said to have blamed the advice of his friends, and especially of Pope Eugenius IV, who was then in Florence, and had offered his media-

tion when Rinaldo's plan of making a final dash at the Palazzo had failed through lack of support. In any case, Rinaldo degli Albizzi now disappears from Florence, to find an asylum with Filippo Maria, Duke of Milan ; and when Cosimo returned to Florence it was to find that his enemies had been already proscribed. The Gonfaloniere Bernardo Guadagni, under whom Cosimo had been banished, was executed ; and the Albizzi driven into exile, were given little mercy or rest, while Cosimo, after his recent experience, was not disposed to show them much consideration.

With the return of Cosimo from exile, in 1434, we enter upon that golden age of Medici ascendancy which reached its highest point under his grandson Lorenzo, and is the subject of the present work. We may affirm, with little hesitation, that without Florence and her achievement, especially in this very period, the place of Italy in intellectual culture and the story of art would have been very different. Even Perrens, who commences his " Histoire de Florence " at this very moment of time and is by no means favourable to Cosimo on many points, has to admit that he owed his complete and lasting ascendancy to the will of the people themselves. " This *parvenu* merchant (*ce marchant parvenu*) rules, we may say, over Florence ; but we must add, at the same time, that he rules entirely by the force of public opinion. He would not have remained in power for twenty-four hours had he not represented a great party, the beaten party of democracy, the victims of the oligarchy. His return is for them a vengeance long desired, and their satisfaction is the secret of his force." [1] Cosimo remains, indeed, a

[1] Cf. F. T. Perrens, " Histoire de Florence, depuis la domination des Medicis à la chute de la Republique " (1434–1531). Paris, 1888. Vol. I., Chapter I.

private citizen ; and never does he seek to appear more than this. He seems to distrust, even to dislike, the glitter and guards of royalty ; but yet within the city, and without, he rises above all men by his personality even more than by his riches. In the contemporary diary of Luca Landucci we observe the overpowering impression [1] created on the average Florentine citizen by this " Cosimo di Giovanni de' Medici, who was called by all the world the Great Merchant (*el gran Mercante*), and whose good opinion and advice was valued by all. So that no greater compliment could be paid to anyone than to say—you seem to be a Cosimo de' Medici (*e' ti par essere Cosimo de' Medici*). That was as much as to say that no greater or richer or more famous man could be found."

Yet holding this unique position within the city and without, his policy expressing her aspirations, focussing and fanning to white heat her wonderful creation, her intellectual and artistic life, this man had the self-control and wise modesty never to exceed in the conduct of his life the position and bearing of an ordinary citizen of Florence. " Though he alone," it was said of him, " was the leader (*principe*) and chief, yet such was his prudence and moderation that he never exceeded the modest behaviour of a citizen (*che mai la civil modestia non trapasso*) ; seeing that in his converse with others, in his retinue, in his manner of riding forth and indeed in his whole method of life and his domestic relations he was always like to any other modest citizen (*a qualcuno modesto cittadino*)."

Even his Palace in the Via Larga and his villas without the city were only part of the recognized establishment of a Florentine citizen of means, to whom the villa in the country was an essential feature of his life and his great

[1] Cf. Luca Landucci, " Diario Florentino."

joy and pride, besides supplying his city home with oil, wine, vegetables and fruit and many other good things. "Of his private houses"—says Machiavelli of Cosimo—"there was one within the city of that substance (*essere*) which was fitting so great a citizen, and four without, at Careggi, at Fiesole, at Cafaggiolo and Trebbio, all of these palaces not so much of a private citizen as of a prince." All these, as well as the noble buildings which were due to his wise munificence—the Convent of San Marco, the Church of San Lorenzo in the city, and, towards Fiesole, San Girolamo and the Badia—gave money and employment to the people, and thus added to his popularity. But the shrewd political observer whom I have just quoted has analyzed very closely the political methods of Cosimo de' Medici. "He knew," Machiavelli tells us, "how to so arrange matters that the *borse*" (in which were placed the names of those competent for magistracy, to be drawn later by lot) "were always filled by the names of his own friends, so that in that way he ran no risk whatever, and could at any time resume the control at his own convenience. At the same time, as the city continued to elect her own magistrates by lot, it seemed to the mass of the citizens that they had recovered their liberty, and that the magistrates administered the laws not according to the will of those in power, but according to their own good judgment; all the more so because . . . whenever there arose any question which interested the people, Cosimo was the first to give it a favourable hearing."

The real power was so guarded, so veiled, that in fact it deceived—as Perrens has pointed out—not only the men of his time, but some of our own contemporaries. "Hardly ever seeing the name (of Cosimo) in the records, they have persuaded themselves that there was only one Florentine the more, that the establishment of a monarchical power

is of later date, in the time of Piero, Cosimo's son, that is to say, in 1466. But they take the appearance for reality, and forgot the precedents of history." [1]

Here the writer goes on to compare in an interesting way the position of Cosimo at Florence and Augustus at Rome, both alike in their slow, progressive and prudent grasp of the real power. Referring to the latter of these, Guglielmo Ferrero has shown, in his "Roma Antica," how the story of Octavian and the Roman Republic was "a change small in appearance, great in its substantial facts," in which a firm intention dominates it all, to satisfy as far as possible old traditions and new aspirations, to re-establish order in the State renewing the glorious time of the aristocracy, and to govern in their name, but through the real autocracy of Cæsar. When we study this period of Roman history we seem to be almost reading of Cosimo; for at Florence in his time the Republic had really ceased to exist, though still respected in its external forms. "From the depth of his Palace Cosimo really governs no less than Augustus, no less than Maso degli Albizzi had done—but with this capital difference, that after Maso's death the power of his son Rinaldo is disputed as real chief of the State, while Cosimo could pass his succession to his son Piero almost without any question."

The whole question of this immense and undoubted power which Cosimo held is a complex one, needing very careful analysis, and makes its partisans even in our own day. Roscoe himself, in his great work on Lorenzo de' Medici, seems scarcely to grasp the position when he writes—"an interchange of reciprocal good offices was the only tie by which the Florentines and Medici were bound;" while a later biographer of the Medici in this century seems frankly *pallesco*.

[1] Cf. Perrens, Vol. I., Chapter I.

It has been well said on this subject that the opinion that Florence, having built up for herself a constitutional system distinguished for Republican freedom, was enslaved by the designing arts of unscrupulous Medicean despots has no warrant from history ; and no less truly that Florence, Republican by her spirit and tradition, found democracy, as her territory and commerce increased, a far from satisfactory answer to the problems of her destiny.[1] Obviously such democracy might result in civil disorder at home, and a weak inconclusive policy abroad. The story of Siena, in this same time, is a patent example of these very results ; and I might venture to remark that the problem is by no means apart from our most modern history. Florence thus accepted the Medici as a compromise, which preserved, at least in appearance, the cherished forms of the Republic, and gave her stable government and continuity of policy. The government which suited the city as a Commune was not the government which suited the territorial State ; and something of civic liberty had to be sacrificed if the sovereignty of the State was to be secured. Florence could pretend not to recognize that she was subject to a despot, when the despot himself was merely one of her own citizens, leading the life of a wealthy and distinguished burgher.

At the same time these great Medici of the earlier time—Cosimo himself, to a less degree, but still in the same tradition, his son Piero, magnificently and completely his grandson Lorenzo—did far more than to control the State, and stabilize its home and foreign policy. They represented themselves all that was most living in Florentine culture. Generous and unfailing patrons,

[1] Cf. "Lorenzo the Magnificent," by E. L. S. Horsburgh, B.A. Chapter I. This whole chapter on the methods and position of the Medici is valuable.

endowed with the keenest appreciation and critical judgment, of scholarship, literature and art in every form, they made Florence the centre of Renaissance culture for Italy and all Europe. I leave this subject for the moment here, because I am treating it directly in my succeeding chapter ; and to Cosimo's generous support both of learning and religion—in great libraries and monastic buildings, such as the Convent of San Marco and the Church of San Lorenzo within Florence, and the Badia near Fiesole—I have already alluded. Perhaps by this splendid generosity to the Church he may have sought to still some occasional pangs of his political conscience : for, whatever others may have thought, Cosimo himself was far too shrewd not to realize his own control of the State. He could never—he said, when praised for these gifts—spend so much on God's service as to put Him in his debt[1] ; and carrying out his great life-work of beautifying and enriching Florence, of making her the foremost city in culture of her time, and at the same time looking after his own immense commercial interests, those of his family, his friends and the many scholars and artists who looked to him as their patron, it may not have always been so difficult to still the pricks of conscience, even if the Republic under his sway was slowly but surely losing her independence and initiative.

[1] Some of Cosimo's sayings, though less admirable, are worth quoting for the insight they afford into his outlook and character. "Better the State spoiled than not ours" . . . "Governments cannot be made with paternosters" . . . "An ell of scarlet makes a burgher" . . . "I aim at finite aims." Symonds remarks of these, somewhat severely, that they represent the man in (1) his egotism, willing to gain Florence for his family at any cost ; (2) his cynical acceptance of base means ; (3) his belief that money makes a man, fine cloth a citizen ; (4) his worldly ambition, bent on positive success. But it is fair also to note that this positivism was in the very air of Florence of the *cinque-cento ;* and that, as a sentimental politician, Cosimo could not have held the State for two years, much less founded a dynasty.

Suddenly an event occurred which forced from him a definite decision, which compelled the great merchant prince, now master of Florence, at length to show his hand, to declare himself for or against the cause of liberty. Rinaldo degli Albizzi, driven from the city, his whole family hunted down in their exile by the Medici power, had taken refuge with Filippo Maria, Duke of Milan, and kept pressing that despot to make war on Florence—a war which did in fact break out, but without very serious results to either party. But Cosimo needed a general, a paid Condottiere to lead his forces, and found just the man he wanted in Francesco Sforza, who had been born in Tuscany at San Miniato al Tedesco, was one of the most successful military leaders of his time, and had at the age of thirty-five obtained the promise of the hand of Bianca—natural daughter of Duke Filippo Maria, and sole heiress of the Duchy of Milan. During the last years of his reign, Filippo Maria, as ambitious as his father, Gian Galeazzo, though without his exceptional ability or state-craft, was constantly at war with the Republics of Florence and Venice ; his general was the famous Niccolo Piccinino, while Venice employed the no less famed Condottiere Bartolommeo Colleoni. In 1441 the Duke of Milan made peace with the two Republics, and granted at length to Francesco Sforza his daughter Bianca in marriage, with the lordships of Cremona and Pontremoli ; but he soon recommenced his habitual intrigues, and in 1447 Sforza was commanding the allied armies of the two Republics, when he learned the news of the death at Milan of his father-in-law, Duke Filippo, on August 13th of that year.

The spirit of liberty still survived in Milan, once the leading city of the Lombard Republics, and now blazed forth again, unconquered, on the death of the Visconti

despot. The people proclaimed a Republic; but its leaders were so short-sighted as to engage Francesco Sforza, the very man of whom they should have been most on their guard, as general of the new-born Republic. In one brilliant campaign he drove back the Venetians, who, under the ambitious policy of Doge Foscari, were threatening the Milanese territory, burnt their fleet, and took almost the whole army prisoners at Caravaggio. Then Sforza suddenly turned round, accepted the easy terms which Venice was only too thankful to offer, and recalling his victorious army, marched as conqueror on Milan; when he had reduced the surrounding cities he blockaded the Milanese in their own capital. Too late the citizens of Milan, aware of his treachery, saw their extreme danger; the Venetians attempted to help them, but were defeated on December 28th; within the city the famine became insupportable, and on February 25th, 1450, the people rose, and the day following opened their gates to Francesco Sforza, proclaiming him Duke of Milan. "Italy," writes Symonds, "had lost a noble opportunity. If Florence and Venice had taken part with Milan, and had stimulated the flagging energies of Genoa, four powerful Republics in federation might have maintained the freedom of the Peninsula, and have resisted foreign interference. But Cosimo de' Medici, who was silently founding the despotism of his own family in Florence, preferred to see a Duke in Milan; and Venice, guided by the Doge Francesco Foscari, thought only of territorial aggrandisement. The chance was lost. The liberties of Milan were extinguished."

We have to remember that at the close of the same century it was the Duke of Milan, one of the same Sforza dynasty, who had been, and now was, established as despot, who, for his private ambition, brought the French

king and his armies into Italy ; and thus hurried forward the catastrophe to that country, leading to her ruin and eventual enslavement, which will enter, at least in its earlier phase, into my present story. When, therefore, we appeciate the great merits of Cosimo de' Medici and the immortal work he achieved for Florence and for the whole of Renaissance art and culture, to which I shall come in my next chapters, when we regard him as a great merchant prince, guiding his city for her good and respecting always the traditional forms of the Republic, we cannot add—viewing the action which I have just described, and which was fully in keeping with what we know of his coldly positive character—that he was either a true friend to Italy in her best and highest political aspirations, or a sincere supporter of freedom.

CHAPTER II

THE HUMANISTS AT FLORENCE

PALLA DEGLI STROZZI was one of the great merchant princes of Florence. When the *Catasto* —a property tax—had been introduced by Giovanni de' Bicci, it had shown, in 1421, the property of this leader of the Strozzi House (whose superb palace still remains to us in the centre of old Florence) as more by a fifth than that of the head of the Medici family. During the contest which I have described in the last chapter he had endeavoured to preserve a neutral attitude ; which perhaps in his case was not so difficult, for the real sympathies of Palla were rather with learning than politics. But on Cosimo's return to power he was considered too rich and powerful to be allowed to remain in the city, and was banished for ten years to Padua : even at the end of that time he was not permitted to return, and he died in exile, separated from his family.

This unjust and cruel sentence—for such it seems—even if a measure of policy is one which reflects little credit on Cosimo de' Medici : but it was borne by the exile himself with a noble spirit of philosophy. Passionately devoted to the new learning, he found in it his refuge and his solace in those years of exile. " Amid the tribulations of his latter years," it has been said, " Palla continued to derive comfort from study. John Argyropoulos

was his guest at Padua, where the collection of books and the cultivation of Greek learning went on with no less vigour than at Florence."[1]

I mention this incident, within the period we have just traversed, more particularly because it shows that the patronage and culture of Humanism at Florence was by no means confined to the Medici themselves and their immediate circle. Rinaldo degli Albizzi, Cosimo's greatest rival, was himself a scholar, and chose the great Humanistic scholar, Tommaso di Sarzana—who became later Pope Nicholas V—for tutor to his children. This movement of Humanism—of which Florence was the focus, the central point—was in the air at this time, and had penetrated all the political parties, and every side of social life. "The age in which we live," wrote Burckhardt, "is loud enough in proclaiming the worth of culture, and especially of the culture of antiquity. But the enthusiastic devotion to it, the recognition that the need of it is the first and greatest of all needs is nowhere to be found but among the Humanists of the fifteenth and the early part of the sixteenth centuries. On this point we have indirect proof which precludes all doubt. It would not have been so common to give the daughters of the house a share in the same studies had they not been held to be the noblest of earthly pursuits; nor would exile have been turned into a happy retreat, as was done by Palla Strozzi."[2] But the same writer admits in the fullest terms the debt which Florentine scholarship owed to Cosimo de' Medici—"a great merchant and party leader, who had also on his side all the thinkers, writers and investigators, a man who was the first of the Florentines by birth and the first of the

[1] Symonds, "The Renaissance in Italy." Chapter IV, "The Revival of Learning."

[2] Burckhardt, "The Renaissance in Italy." Part III, Chapter IV.

Italians by culture "—most of all in his recognizing the immense cultural merits of the Platonic philosophy, in inspiring his friends with the same belief, and "thus in fostering within humanistic circles another and a higher resuscitation of antiquity." I shall come later to this side of Cosimo's work for Florence, with which the name of Marsilio Ficino is intimately connected, and believe that it may prove not the least interesting part of my present study; but I wish now to speak of the whole movement in detail, as it developed itself, more especially within Florence.

For here—as elsewhere in Italy, but most directly here—it was the rebirth of the Past, springing out of that classic soil, and deriving its force [1] "from the intense sense of the Italians of that time in the continuity of their history, in their unity with that buried past, with those world-ruling Romans they adored—a sentiment which was a most potent factor in the whole Renaissance movement." In support of this view we may notice here that it was his visit to Rome, and the inspiration of the monuments of her mighty past, which first suggested to the old Florentine chronicler, Villani, the idea of writing the annals of his own beloved city. "Being in Rome," he tells us, "for the Jubilee" (of the year 1300), "and admiring the grand memories of that city, reading the glorious deeds narrated by Virgil, Sallust, Lucan, Titus Livius, I borrowed their style and form"; and reflecting "that our old Florentines had left few and confused records of their past deeds in our city of Florence, and that our city, the child and creature of Rome, was in the upward path, and about to achieve great things, whereas Rome was on the decline," he then and there resolved

[1] Cf, Selwyn Brinton, "The Renaissance in Italian Art." Part IV. "Humanism and Art."

" to bring into this volume and new chronicle all the events and beginnings of the city of Florence."

In this statement it is interesting to notice not only the writer's conviction that Florence was " the child and creature of Rome " (the tradition of the Roman *municipium* still surviving), and, even in that early time, already conscious of her great future destiny ; but also that this present of his day was indissolubly connected with the great classic past. We think here, too, of Petrarch ascending, with his friend Giovanni Colonna, the mighty vaults of the Baths of Diocletian ; while there, in the transparent air, amid the wide silence with the broad panorama stretching beneath them, they spoke, not of business or political affairs, but of the history which the ruins beneath their feet suggested, Petrarch as the champion of the classic past, Giovanni of Christian antiquity. Or, yet again, we may watch the Humanist scholar Poggio—whom I shall come to later in this chapter—wandering among those ruins, seeking out among the weeds which covered them the antique inscriptions, to be entered (written about 1430) in his own " Ruinarum Urbis Romæ Descriptio " : or again, that great Humanistic Pope, Pius II (Æneas Silvius Piccolomini) carried in his litter across the Roman Campagna to Tibur and Tusculum, and forgetting for awhile his gout as he discussed with the famous Condottiere, Federigo di Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, on the military system of the ancients and the wars of Troy.

But it is not merely the recovery of the past, but this, combined with its glad and passionate acceptance by the Italian genius, which gives to this whole movement its special value and significance for that time and later ages. For since that past much had supervened—had come to blend with and mould the national character—

the barbarian invasions and Lombard conquest, the rebirth of the free communes, chivalry, the influence of religion, of the great religious orders and the Church; and Burckhardt is, in my judgment, absolutely right when he exclaims, "We must insist upon it . . . that it was not the revival of antiquity alone, but its union with the genius of the Italian people which achieved the conquest of the western world. The amount of independence," he goes on to add, "which the national spirit maintained in this union varied according to circumstance. In the modern Latin literature of the period it was very small; in the plastic arts and other spheres it is remarkably great." It must be remembered here that Latin was still the official language of Europe, in which all-important State matters were transacted: it was thus essential in those days that the Papal Secretaries, and also those of the great Italian Principalities or Republics, should be good Latinists. "The Apostolic Secretaries," says one writer, "have the most weighty business of the world in their hands. For who but they decide in matters of the Catholic faith—who else combat heresy, re-establish peace, and mediate between monarchs? Who but they write the statistical accounts of Christendom? It is they who astonish kings, princes and nations by what comes forth from the Pope." Cicero—especially in his letters—and Pliny were the models for such Latinists as, under Lorenzo de' Medici, the poet and scholar, Angelo Poliziano, or, in a later generation, Cardinal Pietro Bembo, who felt it necessary to apologize for writing in Italian.

In Florence, above all, the Secretaries of the Republic were required to be fine scholars and Humanists; and between 1427 and 1463 three great Florentine Secretaries, natives of Tuscany if not of Florence herself, filled this office with the highest fame and erudition—these being

Leonardo Bruni, Carlo Marsuppini, called Aretino (of Arezzo) from his birthplace, and Benedetto Accolti. Two of these, Leonardo Bruni and Carlo Aretino, had been Apostolic Secretaries before being promoted to the Chancery of Florence, and were both buried within S. Croce with the highest civic honours : their monuments, facing one another within that great Florentine church, respectively by Bernardo Rossellino and Desiderio da Settignano, are masterpieces of Renaissance art within the period we are now approaching, and I shall refer to them later. That of Bruni, who died in 1443, is probably an excellent likeness. Messer Carlo himself was intimately connected with the Florentine " Studio," where he continued to lecture upon the Greek language, even after he had taken Leonardo's place as Secretary of State to the Republic ; and this " Studio " claims an important place in our survey of Humanistic culture in this age and city, while another scholar, the famous Poggio Bracciolini, who later became also Secretary to the Republic (*hic honor*—it is said of his appointment—*apud Florentinos magnus habetur*) was also born on Florentine soil.

In the first years of the fifteenth century Humanistic culture at Florence was indeed at its highest point, and the lecture rooms, in which Carlo Aretino and Filelfo were rivals for the largest audience, were filled with eager students. Coming from the Marches of Ancona Filelfo had studied rhetoric and Latin literature at Padua, had filled the Chair of Eloquence at Venice, and came to know there two famous teachers of the time, Guarino and that Vittorino da Feltre, who had established his school at Mantua under the patronage of her Gonzaga Princes. This was in 1417, but in 1419 Filelfo had resolved to study Greek and collect Greek books within Byzantium itself : the journey there took him five months, but on arriving in

1420 he lost no time in placing himself under the tuition of John Chrysoloras and married his daughter, Theodora.[1] The literary squabbles of this time were frequently as noisy as they were violent and indecent, and that between Poggio and Filelfo later on, in which the former throws this marriage at the latter's head, seems to have excelled all others in coarsely personal abuse ; but Filelfo's position at the Byzantine Court seems to have been a fairly good one, till, in 1427, tempted by an offer of the Chair of Eloquence, he found himself back on the quays of Venice, with his wife and infant son, four female slaves and two menservants, and—not least important—a large supply of Greek books.[2] He found Venice offering him, after seven years' absence, but a poor reception. The plague was in the city, the lecture-rooms empty ; and he decided to accept the invitation sent him from Florence by such scholars as Ambrogio Traversari, Niccolo de' Niccoli, Palla Strozzi and Leonardo Bruni, and to transfer his domestic circle across the Appenines to the city of Arno. The movement of Humanism was at that moment at its height ; and the illustrious scholar from Venice, who had brought back the Greek language and the Greek authors from Byzantium itself, was welcomed in Florence with enthusiasm. " The whole State," he wrote, " is turned to look at me. All men love and honour me, and praise

[1] This Theodora was only fourteen when she wedded the Italian scholar, and was connected by blood with the Imperial family of the Palæologi. Poggio's remarks about her relations with his literary rival before marriage, as well as on the position, " like that of a mangy old dog "—" *tanquam canem aliquem senio et aetate confectum* "—of Filelfo in this Byzantine household, may be considered as merely abusive personalities. A " two-legged ass " and " silly beast " are among other epithets here applied to him by Poggio.

[2] The catalogue of his library, quoted by Symonds from Filelfo's letter to Traversari, is astonishing : it includes Aristotle, Strabo, Herodotus, Thucydides, Demosthenes, Hesiod, Seven Tragedies of Euripides, and other works.

me to the skies. My name is on every lip. . . . My audience numbers every day four hundred persons, mostly men advanced in years and of the dignity of senators." [1]

In order to appreciate better the value of this reception we must here go back awhile to see something of the history of this movement, then reaching its culmination, and of the men who were behind it in Florence. Dating back in its beginnings to the time of Petrarch and Boccaccio, by the counsel of the former of these the Augustinian monk, Luigi Marsigli, had been turned to the study of "Literæ Humaniores"; and around him, in his later life, within the Convent of S. Spirito had gathered a little band of enthusiastic scholars, among whom was Coluccio de' Salutati, Chancellor of the Republic. This Convent of S. Spirito, containing Boccaccio's library, thus soon became an intellectual centre in Florence; and here it is but just to give due credit to Giovanni Boccaccio, who had sown the seed which was now bearing fruit, and in so doing had raised such antagonism that he had been solemnly warned by the monk Gioacchino Ciani to give up his pagan studies, under pain of speedy death in this world and the next; and was so frightened that he had decided to do so, had not his friend Petrarch dissuaded him, by shewing to him that Humanism was by no means irreconcilable with religion. The lecture or debating room of S. Spirito, where Marsigli discoursed on theology or morals, was already a school of thought, whence issued some of the greatest scholars of the next generation: in those early years of the fifteenth century, when, as Burckhardt[2] has

[1] V. Symonds, "Revival of Learning." Chapter V, for his letter, quoted by Cantu.

[2] V. Burckhardt, "The Renaissance in Italy." Part III, Chapter I.

remarked, the University of Florence was at its greatest brilliancy, when Carlo Aretino and Filelfo were competing for the largest audiences, there existed not only an almost completed University among these Augustinians of S. Spirito, not only an association of scholars among the Camaldolese of the S. Angeli (where Cosimo himself had received his training in scholarship), but also an interested public, an audience waiting to receive the message that was coming.

It is the moment of discovery, of the reconquest of the Past; and here two names demand imperatively our attention. Niccolo de' Niccoli has been described as a man who could tolerate nothing around him out of harmony with his own classical spirit.[1] "To behold him at table," says his contemporary Vespasiano, "like one of the ancients, was a joy to behold (*a vederlo a tavola, cosi antico come era, era una gentilezza*)"; and reading this account we seem almost to behold the kindly old scholar, a handsome long-robed figure, seated at his table where all is scrupulously clean—"where ancient vases and goblets stood before him upon the whitest of linen." His house, adorned with the noblest remains of antiquity, was open to every true student, and his priceless books at their disposal[2]: without being a profound Greek scholar he was a brilliant Latinist—so that Leonardo Bruni, no mean judge, in dedicating to him his "Life of Cicero" called him "The Censor of the Latin tongue." At this moment fresh discoveries of manuscripts, hidden away in dusty convent libraries, or brought across the seas from the dying Greek Empire, were daily coming to light; and our Niccolo, in close touch with all the world of

[1] V. Burckhardt, op. cit.

[2] "No one," writes Poggio, "who knows anything (*qui aliquid sapit*) can come to Florence without thinking he should see Niccolo's house and books."

scholarship, had spent his whole fortune on the acquisition of books and manuscripts when Cosimo de' Medici, who loved and appreciated the old scholar, came to his aid, placed, with splendid generosity, the resources of the Medici Bank at his disposal, and told his cashiers that Niccolo's drafts were to be honoured whenever presented.

But the great scholar had his weaknesses, which, after all, were only human. He possessed a temper, which led him into the most violent jealousies and quarrels with Filelfo (I shall touch this later), Guarino of Verona, Aurispa, even the Greek Chrysoloras, whom he had himself brought to Florence to further the study of that language. This advent of Chrysoloras is of first importance in the history of Humanism—no less so than the later visit of Filelfo himself. Emanuel Chrysoloras had come to the city first in the train of that Gemistos Plethon, of whom I shall come to speak later: he returned as envoy of his Emperor to implore for help against the Turks who were threatening Byzantium and what remained of the Eastern Empire, and he now accepted an invitation from Florence for the Chair of Greek Literature and Grammar for a period of years. "His passage," says the historian, Perrens, "is epoch-making; his success a symptom of the times. He opened new horizons; he had communicated the sacred fire.[1] Scholastic philosophy gave way before rhetoric, which is now called *Omnium scientiarum persuasorium instrumentum*, and again *Rerum publicarum maximum instrumentum*. The 'Studio' became transformed; for hitherto no one there had seriously understood Greek."

This "Studio Fiorentino," where the efforts of Boccaccio had established a Chair of Greek Letters, filled by

[1] V. F. T. Perrens, "Histoire de Florence." Tome I, Chapter V.

Leontius Pilatus, had persisted in spite of difficulties, had been closed, reopened, closed again—till in 1428 the initiative of Palla Strozzi had brought Chrysoloras there to teach Greek, and later—as we have seen— Filelfo from Bologna. The successive influence of these two teachers was immense. Compared with the earlier Greek refugees, who had known little Latin and less Italian,—" Chrysoloras," says Perrens, " is really a man of letters. Thanks to him Greek, a language so different to Latin, became a citizen of Florence—its beauties felt in all their delicacy by the man of taste, in their subtleties by the philologist, their power of dialectic by the philosopher. Two literatures, two civilizations, and no longer merely two languages are brought face to face, and their contact is in itself a source of light. Among the countless disciples of the new learning we find Roberto de' Rossi—himself the teacher of Cosimo de' Medici and of Luca degli Albizzi—Gianozzo Manetti, Palla Strozzi, Leonardo Bruni, Poggio Bracciolini, Carlo Marsuppini, Francesco Filelfo, Guarino da Verona, Giovanni Aurispa, Lorenzo Valla, and yet others; not all born at Florence, but of whom many taught there in succession, notably Guarino and Aurispa, who were even more useful by their teaching than their writings."

It was the age of rhetoric, Latin being more generally used when " listening was among the pleasures of life, when every imagination was filled with the memories of the Roman Senate and its great speakers." Cultured princes themselves were not indisposed to discourse in Latin or Italian, or were willing to sit for hours at displays in public of learned eloquence. When the Florentine Gianozzo Manetti—a brilliant scholar and noble character, though not in favour with the Medici—brought the congratulations of the Signory of Florence to King Alfonso

of Aragon, himself a famous patron of the new learning, such was the impression made by him that we are told the learned monarch sat motionless on his throne through the full length of the address—" like to a statue of bronze, nor did he even brush away a fly which had settled on his nose at the beginning of the oration." Even that tyrant of Rimini, whom Burckhardt calls " the bold pagan Condottiere Sigismondo Malatesta," naturally the most impatient of men, was ready to spend hours in this way in the cause of learning. He lived surrounded by scholars, for many of whom he provided liberally, even giving them landed estates ; and in his citadel, the *arx Sismundea*, they would hold discussions, often of a venomously personal character, in the presence of their *rex* ; or sing his praises in Latin verse, and celebrate the charms of his mistress, the fair Isotta, as whose monument the church of S. Francesco at Rimini was being rebuilt—*Divæ Isottæ sacrum.*

But we have to admit that the quarrels of these Humanistic scholars were frequent and notorious : even Niccolo de' Niccoli, with all his personal charm and culture of life, became entangled in them. He is stated to have carried off his brother's sweetheart, one Benvenuta, and to have placed her as housekeeper in his establishment ; meeting the girl subsequently in the street his relatives had assailed her with reproaches. Even the scholar Leonardo Bruni had been injudicious enough to express approval of their action ; and, this remark of his having come back to Niccolo, a terrible quarrel arose. Bruni published an invective against his old friend with the title of " Oratio in nebulonem maledicum " ; and Niccolo within his own circle replied by biting sarcasm. An altogether higher character was that of Gianozzo Manetti, whose address to King Alfonso I have already mentioned.

He has been called one of the most profound scholars of his time ; and his life, as given us by Vespasiano Bisticci, bears witness to this, and still more to his noble character. When sent from Florence to govern the city of Pistoja he did so with entire impartiality, and was adored by the Pistojesi ; the history of their city, which he composed in his leisure hours, was preserved as a sacred relic in the town hall.

The name of Poggio Bracciolini has already come before us in this chapter : indeed, it would be difficult to pass him by in any account of the Humanists at Florence ; a friend of both, he had for years tried vainly to appease the quarrel just mentioned between Niccolo and Bruni. Born at Castel Terranuova, near Florence, when he came to the city as a poor lad he had been helped by Coluccio Salutati, while later Niccolo had—as he says himself (*hic mihi parens ab adolescentia, hic postmodum amicus, his studiorum meorum adjutor*)—been almost a father to the young student, urging him to the study of the immortal writers of the past. Poggio was probably in Florence when Chrysoloras made his visit, and derived his Greek from that teacher, while Cosimo made use of his services to copy Cicero's " Letters to Atticus " ; but soon after he became attached to the Roman Curia, and in his position as Apostolic Secretary at the Council of Constance had been able to explore the Swiss convents, and to discover manuscripts of priceless value. Such was the complete copy of Quintillian's "Institutes," which he discovered in the Convent of S. Gallen, " safe as yet and sound, though covered with dust and filthy with neglect and age," and which, after he had himself transcribed it, he despatched to Leonardo Bruni, who received it with enthusiasm. " The Republic of Letters," he wrote in acknowledgment, " has reason to rejoice not only in the works you have discovered

but also in those you have still to find" ; and, in fact, we owe much to Poggio's indefatigable research, among others the texts of Cicero's "Pro Cæcina," of Lucretius, Columella and Vitruvius. He was even on the track of the lost books of Livy, but this scent, which has so often proved false, could not be run to earth. He was an enthusiast in this hunt for buried treasures of past learning ; and "no severity of winter cold, no snow, no length of journey, no roughness of roads could deter him."

But Poggio was more than a student or mere bookworm. He was an orator and historian, a brilliant essayist, who, though in the service of the Roman Curia, never lost his independence, and indeed satirized without mercy the scandals of the Church, not sparing even the names of living persons. In his "Facetiarum Liber" he tells us that he spared no one (*parcebatur nemini*) in attacking those things which he did not approve, and both this work and his essays—"De Nobilitate," "De Varietate Fortunæ," "De Infelicitate Principum" and others—were widely read and circulated. Cosimo found such a man most useful, and treated him with every consideration ; and there can be no doubt of Poggio's sincere devotion to Florence, which he regarded as his intellectual home, and defended when she had been abused by Duke Filippo Maria of Milan, replying that "there is no city in Italy to be compared with Florence for her intellectual life, her learning, her clear common sense and her refinement of life." Feeling as he did we can appreciate his joy and pride when, on Carlo Marsuppini's death, he was offered by the Signory the post of Chancellor of the Republic ; and, though already seventy-three years of age, he did not hesitate to accept this weighty office,—"setting before himself the example of his old friends Salutato,

Bruni and Marsuppini in that same Chancellery." [1] At the age of fifty-five he had married—his essay, " An Seni sit Uxor ducenda " sounds like an apology for this step in life—a young Florentine girl of eighteen of the Buondelmonti family, abandoning in so doing a mistress who had borne him many children ; but however we may blame such conduct we must remember the moral code of the time, not excepting the Humanists, was not a high one, and his rival and opponent Filelfo, though he had married twice after the death of his Byzantine Theodora, and had twelve sons and daughters, had also several natural children.

The quarrel with Filelfo, into which Poggio threw himself with all the energy of his temperament, lasted for years ; but we should be wrong in considering it merely as a matter of personal abuse and animosity. It went far deeper than this, and was intimately connected with the hegemony of the Medici house in Florence. For that power was based in no small degree on their intellectual leadership ; and Cosimo, like his grandson Lorenzo later, had gathered around him the scholars and thinkers, no less than the artists, both as a friend as well as a generous and all-powerful patron. Therefore when Filelfo assailed Cosimo, and covered him—as well as the whole group of scholars around him, including Niccolo de' Niccoli, Carlo Aretino, and Poggio himself—with every kind of ridicule and abuse in hexameter verse, the Medicean scholars were naturally at once in arms. We must not here forget that it had been Palla Strozzi who had brought Filelfo to lecture at Florence ; where his presence and popularity at the " Studio," and probably his

[1] V. Selwyn Brinton, " The Renaissance: Its Art and Life." Chapter I.

aggressive personality, were very soon resented by Carlo Marsuppini, Niccolo and Poggio. To drive him out of Florence they hit on the ingenious scheme of a general reduction in the salaries of all the professors in that city: a tender point[1] this for Filelfo, who was as fond (we might say greedy) of money as he was prodigal,—but always ready for a fight, he appealed, not without success, against this unfair and foolish decision.

Then came the attack on Cosimo by Rinaldo degli Albizzi and his imprisonment, which I have already described in my last chapter; and Filelfo, with what Poggio graphically described as "the filthy sewer of his mouth," could not resist the opportunity of insulting Cosimo in prison. More than this, he may have sought his destruction; and even advised his patron, Palla Strozzi, not to let their enemy out of their hands.[2] His vindictive attitude at this crisis is not to his credit: it certainly cost him dear, for Cosimo never forgot or forgave those who showed themselves as his enemies at that time. Florence, upon Cosimo's triumphant return, became impossible before long for Filelfo; and, in fact, within twelve days of that event he was talking of retiring to Siena, where he now found a refuge. From his retirement he cannot even yet cease from attacking Cosimo, whom he

[1] Filelfo had written to Palla Strozzi, before arriving in Florence, "*Existimo consuetudinem meam non esse ignotam. Non modo fœnerari non didici, sed ne parcus quidem*, etc. *Haud enim consuevi unquam servire nummis.*" ("Philelphi Epistolæ," quoted by Perrens, op. cit.) When at Milan, under his Sforza patrons, "the letters he wrote," says Symonds, "abound in impudent demands for money, and violent menaces of retaliation if his salary remained in arrears."

[2] Cf. his letter to Palla Strozzi, under date of September 1st, 1434. "*Cavendum est a pecunia Cosmiana; est enim vir ille versutus et callidus . . . Tantam opportunitatem nunquam sinet elabi sibi e manibus.*" This letter throws some light upon Cosimo's attitude later to Palla Strozzi.

accused of plotting against his life,[1] and was in return proclaimed as a rebel; furious at the sentence he seems to have actually let loose upon Cosimo a Greek assassin, and was now sentenced to perpetual banishment from the Florentine territory.

But Cosimo knew well the value of Filelfo to Florentine learning; and the wise old scholar, Ambrogio Traversari, sought to bring about peace between them. Even Poggio's stream of invective—in which he included Filelfo's female relations, and described his opponent as a thief and atheist, soiled with every form of vice—had begun to weaken; and these two literary gladiators, "the one discharging darts of verse, the other" (Poggio) "a heavy club of (Latin) prose," were inclined to rest, from mutual exhaustion.[2] The mediation of the Duke of Milan, who was now Filelfo's patron, might at this time have brought him back to Florence, but that the Sforza preferred to keep the scholar at Milan for himself. There can be no doubt that, in the midst of his life at the Court of Milan and polemics, Filelfo's heart really yearned for Florence—the true centre of intellectual life. Meanwhile the "Studio" had been reorganized by Francesco Sacchetti and Niccolo de' Niccoli in 1434, closed in 1437, and again for five years, in which "*defecit Studium*," from 1447 to 1452, while scholars frequented the Convent of

[1] Filelfo had been stabbed in the face in the spring of 1433 while walking to the University, and declared that the man was paid to kill him by the Medici. Symonds, referring to the trial and confession later of this bravo, given by Rosmini, seems to suggest there may have been some truth in Filelfo's assertion.

[2] Poggio's battles had not been always only of the pen. When the Greek, Georgios Trapezuntios, accused him of using his translation of Xenophon, Poggio shrieked out "You lie in your throat" . . . catching his adversary by the hair; and the two professors pommelled each other till their respective pupils parted them. "*Tantaene iræ*—these latter might have suggested—*cælestibus animis?*"

the Angels or the Villa of Cosimo at Careggi. The revival of the neo-Platonic philosophy, Cosimo's greatest achievement in scholarship, I shall treat by itself under his grandson—who completed what he had begun in this direction—in a later chapter; but in 1456 John Argyropoulos came from Byzantium, and with him new names appear in the world of scholarship; among them those of Angelo Poliziano, poet, Latinist, intimate of Lorenzo de' Medici, and Cristoforo Landino, born at Florence in 1424, who taught Greek literature and Platonic philosophy.

But let us turn back from these names of a later age to Filelfo, whom we left at Milan busied with scholarship, love and quarrels, and a Latin epic on his Sforza patron which has mercifully sunk into oblivion, after reaching 12,800 lines of gross flatteries. "He metes out praise and blame" writes a contemporary, "according to the gifts he gets"; and he had the audacity, after losing his second wife, to write to Nicholas V, the famous Humanist Pope, suggesting that a bishop's mitre would not be unwelcome. Tommaso Parentucelli was born at Pisa in 1398, but followed his exiled parents to Sarzana; he studied theology at Bologna, and was received by Rinaldo degli Albizzi and later by Palla Strozzi as tutor to their children. He thus came into touch with the world of scholarship in Florence, and returned in the train of a Cardinal, Niccolo Albergati, Archbishop of Bologna, when the Papal Court came to Florence under Eugenius IV. We get a glimpse of him at this time in the pages of Vespasiano, who tells us, "It was the wont of Messer Lionardo d'Arezzo" (Bruni), "Messer Gianozzo Manetti, Messer Poggio, Messer Carlo d'Arezzo" (Marsuppini), "Messer Giovanni Aurispa . . . and other men of learning to congregate every morning and evening at the side

of the Palazzo, where they entered into discussions on various subjects. As soon, then, as Maestro Tommaso had attended the Cardinal to the Palazzo he joined them, mounted on a mule, with two servants on foot. . . . In the place I have named he was always to be found, conversing and disputing, since he was a most impassioned debater." When Albergati died Eugenius IV put Tommaso di Sarzana in his place as Archbishop of Bologna : a Cardinal's hat soon followed, and a few years later (1447) he was elected Pope at Rome. This was the complete and ultimate triumph of Humanism. The poor Florentine scholar, now become Pope as Nicholas V, maintained a splendid Court, and was a generous patron to men of letters ; but his greatest achievement for learning was the foundation of the Vatican Library, for which he employed a number of well-paid scribes, acquired the choicest books and manuscripts, and brought together about five thousand volumes, himself superintending their collection. The tradition of fine scholarship and its patronage—with but one or two exceptions—was adhered to by the Roman Pontiffs throughout the Renaissance, culminating in the brilliant Papacy of Leo X.

When Filelfo passed through Rome (in 1453) on his way to Naples, Nicholas V received him with honours, and offered him 600 ducats if he would remain to devote his talents to translation. This salary was not sufficient to tempt him from Milan ; but later, under Sixtus IV, the offer of a Professorial Chair in Rome, with a stipend of 600 florins, and the prospect of a post in the Apostolic Chancery, was more successful. The old scholar passed through Florence on his way south in 1475, and began his lectures in Rome in January of that year with the "Tusculan Disputations" of Cicero. At first all seemed

'couleur de rose': appreciation and marks of honour were showered on him. But Sixtus IV, whose character we shall study later, did not prove a satisfactory patron; the lecturer's salary dropped into arrears, and when the Pazzi conspiracy failed Filelfo wrote to congratulate Lorenzo on his escape, and—wisely from Milan—to the Pope himself to denounce his share in this murderous plot. All the old man now longed for was to end his days in Florence, the city of his first success, the true home of his soul, near these Medici whom he had abused and quarrelled with—and had now forgiven; invited to fill again the Chair of Greek Literature in Florence he eagerly accepted. This was in 1481, when he was eighty-three years of age; and he arrived in the city of his dreams only to end his days within her walls: a fortnight after his arrival he died, and was buried by the Florentines within the Church of the Annunziata.

Filelfo, with all his faults of temperament and character—his arrogance, his self-assertiveness, his greed, his furious tempers—was a great scholar, a great personality in his time. For us he has a special value as a typical Humanist—one of those men who, in the crash of the Eastern Empire before the barbarous Turk, brought back and secured for us for all time the treasures of ancient learning. This was his achievement, in common with the other scholars of his age; and for this much may be forgiven them. If it was an age when "indiscriminate erudition passed for scholarship, crude verbiage for eloquence," yet these men, giants in their efforts and enthusiasm, went forth—as Ciriac of Ancona had exclaimed—"to awaken the dead," recovered for our intellectual life the domain of ancient literature, and, in so doing, made us their debtors for all time. Within a later age we shall see, even in the present volume, a finer

critical appreciation of those classics, choicer Latinity and Italian, neglected by them, restored to its place as a national literature. But then their work was done ; and we build on those secure foundations which their strong and tireless hands had laid.

CHAPTER III

GHIBERTI AND BRUNELLESCHI

IF the Medici ascendancy in Florence, whose definite establishment under Cosimo de' Medici we have traced in the preceding chapters, had given nothing to the world save the recovery of the philosophy and literature of the antique world it would still possess an eternal claim on the gratitude of humanity. But it achieved much more than this : for to the intelligent and generous patronage of these Medici merchant princes is, to a large extent, directly due the most wonderful outburst of multiform art creation which the world has ever known.

This is not to say that, if Cosimo, Piero di Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici had not acquired the power they held at this time in Florence, the Renaissance of Italian Art would never have taken place. Dating back from the days of Pisan power it had its roots far too deep for this to have been possible : it preceded them, and would certainly have found some form—though possibly a different one—of eventual efflorescence. Already, under the Albizzi, that wonderful movement of Tuscan art, initiated by Giotto and his contemporaries, had begun to assume its later form ; and Sismondi, who champions the claim of this fallen dynasty as against the Medici, points out this fact, and adds with a certain justice, that under their rule were born those great men of whose genius the Medici came later to reap the glory.

The roots of the Revival were, in fact, deep in this old Tuscan soil, in the still unconquered Latin tradition : nay, it may go even deeper yet, and trace back through the dark ages, the barbarian invasions, even the Latin culture itself, to the primitive race who once dominated Etruria and the most of Italy. I owe this suggestion, in part, to the interesting study, lately published by Dr. Weege, on the Etruscan tombs of Corneto Guidi.[1] The famous goldsmith's work of those old Etruscans had come to life again, this author suggests, in the craftsmanship of Cellini and his Florentine predecessors and contemporaries. Etruscan influence appears, as Dr. Venturi also judges, in the earlier Tuscan architecture. The recumbent figures of Etruscan tombs might be the ancestors of these Christian sleeping forms—such as Rossellino's *Leonardo Bruni*, or Della Quercia's *Ilaria del Carretto*; and even the famed doors of the Florentine Baptistery far-off descendants of those which the Roman Camillus had borne away from conquered Veii. Can the city of Veii —exclaims the German author—find in Vulci, the master of her recently found treasures, her Donatello or Ghiberti ? The latest discoveries leave us hoping for something even greater in this direction. " If we seek to find in the dry realism of the *quattro-cento* portraits by Benedetto da Majano or Antonio Rossellino something of this Italic soil, an inheritance of the antique art of Rome, then we must surely seek yet deeper, in the Etruscan art of portraiture, for the soil where this

[1] Cf. Dr. Fritz Weege's " Etruskische Malerei " (1921), p. 8 *et seq.* The Etruscans were famous workers in bronze. Dr. Weege has illustrated the Chimæra of Florence and the Wolf of the Capitol of Rome (the twins seem a later addition), as well as a beautiful bronze bust of a young girl in the Museum of Parma, which he observes that no one would at first sight take for an antique ; and which has, especially in profile, quite a *quattro-cento* character, but is an authentic antique, found (1760) in Velleja.

art has its roots." When writing myself on Umbrian art [1] many years before this German work appeared, I had suggested, from my own study, that—" into all the later world of art and Renaissance culture there steals the faint echo of the strange half-known ancestral race, who set their cities with massive eternal walls upon the spurs of the Umbrian mountains, and quarried their tombs deep down into the bowels of the earth." I even traced to that religious ritual, which entered so deeply into what we know of their lives, something of the mystic note which sounds through Umbrian art; but I left this—as I do again here—as a suggestion, for we hardly know enough yet of this ancient Italic people to connect, with anything like certainty, their influence upon later art expression.

But even admitting that Tuscan art, without the keenly interested and intelligent patronage and support of the Medici, would have found its eventual expression, it would have been something different, and probably far less complete: whereas during this wonderful century at Florence, in which their power was mainly predominant, and which has been called the golden age of the Renaissance, it found just the conditions which—like some exquisite flower watched and tended within a sheltered garden—were the most propitious to bring its wonderful bloom to perfection. Only too soon the storm was to come, which—to carry my analogy yet one step farther—was to tear to pieces those lovely odorous petals, to scatter them forth afar—yet fertilizing, yet creative—into the barbarous, half-feudal, yet dimly appreciative world without. That storm indeed threatened, but was yet

[1] Cf. Selwyn Brinton, " The Renaissance in Italian Art." Part VI. " The Master of Perugia."

far on the horizon; and Roscoe,[1] writing more directly of the later days of Lorenzo the Magnificent, has remarked that "this epoch forms one of those scanty portions on the history of mankind on which we may dwell without weeping over the calamities or blushing for the crimes of our species. . . . This season of tranquillity is the interval to which Guicciardini so strikingly adverts in the commencement of his history, as being prosperous beyond any other that Italy had experienced during the long course of a thousand years . . . and which the fancy of the poet, expanding in this gleam of prosperity, has celebrated as realizing in those times the beautiful fiction of the golden age."

Above all, this age from the first was remarkable for the production of men endowed with originality and genius—"ripe, complete personalities, such as the world has seldom seen before or since." In writing the above words in my earlier study of the Humanists, I had taken Leo Battista Alberti as my type. "He is the complete man, *l'uomo universale*, with all his physical and mental powers in perfect balance. He is himself artist, scholar, Humanist all in one: he shares their life, but in his marvellous completeness is greater than each."

The Alberti had been banished from the city in one of the earlier political contests of Florence, but by a decree of the Commune Leo Battista was permitted to return, and has left on record his emotions on finding his beloved native city "in the happiest state, rich in men remarkable for every kind of attainment . . . full of remarkable" (*singulari*—the word is used twice) "citizens, each trying to excel the other in every kind of worthy object (*virtù*)." And then he goes on to mention names. "When I returned from the long exile in which we of the Alberti

[1] V. W. Roscoe, "Life of Lorenzo de' Medici." Chapter VI.

have grown old, restored to this our country, the most adorned with gifts (*ornatissima*) above the others, I came to understand that in many here, but most of all in thee, Filippo, and in that dearest friend of ours the sculptor, Donato, and in those others, Nencio, Luca and Masaccio, there was genius to be found in every direction, which could not be regarded as behind those of the antique world which was so famous in these arts." The Filippo, to whom these appreciative words are addressed, was his intimate friend, to whom he dedicated his work on the "Theory of Painting," the great Florentine sculptor and architect, Filippo Brunelleschi: the "Donato scultore" was, of course, Donatello; Luca I take to refer most probably to Luca della Robbia, who was intimate with this artistic circle; while Masaccio I imagine to be not the famous painter of the Brancacci Chapel, but the sculptor Maso di Bartolommeo, called Masaccio, who worked together with Luca and Michelozzo upon the bronze door of the Sacristy of the Duomo of Florence. These names, together with that of the no less famous Lorenzo Ghiberti, all belonging to the earlier period of Cosimo de' Medici at Florence, will enter fully into my record of the present chapter.

Born in 1377, Filippo Brunelleschi had probably visited Rome as a young student, "eager for fame" (*desideroso d'onore*) before the famous competition for the second bronze door (the first had been by Andrea Pisano) of the Florentine Baptistery. He had come back from Rome, fresh from the inspiration of its antique wonders, to find pitted against him the young Lorenzo Ghiberti with his stepfather, Bartolo di Michele, from Arezzo Niccolo Lamberti and Spinelli, from Siena the famous sculptor Jacopo della Quercia, who, with Simone da Colle, called "of the Bronzes," formed a strong and

formidable list of competitors. The competition became eventually narrowed down to two of the Florentines, Brunelleschi and Lorenzo Ghiberti; and we have no reason to regret this result. Had the great Sienese master, Jacopo della Quercia, been chosen, we might have had something more grandly conceived, more nervous in treatment, as we may judge from his superb group of the *Creation of Eve* upon the façade of S. Petronio at Bologna: while Brunelleschi's conception may be judged directly by us from his trial piece, preserved—along with that of Ghiberti—in the Museo Nazionale at Florence. "A comparison of the two," says Symonds very justly, "leaves no doubt of Ghiberti's superiority. The faults of Brunelleschi's model are want of repose and absence of composition. Abraham rushes in a frenzy of murderous agitation at his son . . . The angel swoops down from heaven with extended arms . . . the ram meanwhile is scratching his nose with his near hind leg. Each figure has a separate uneasy action. . . . Ghiberti, on the other hand, translated the calm of his harmonious nature into his composition." The contrast here suggested [1] seems to me a just one; though Venturi may be right in tracing the figure of the servant in Filippo's panel to the inspiration of the antiques he had studied in Rome. After rousing the keenest interest in art-loving Florence the contest ended with the decision of the Arte dei Mercatanti to entrust the completion of this second door to both artists; but Brunelleschi would not accept the verdict, and returned to Rome, where he was joined before long by the young Donatello, while the design and casting of the doors was left in the hands of Ghiberti, who had to help and advise him his stepfather, Bartoluccio, a noted goldsmith.

[1] V. Symonds, "The Renaissance in Italy." Chap. III, "The Fine Arts."

The two gates of the Florentine Baptistery which he has left us thus became his life-work, and the masterpiece of his creative genius. In the first, which was finally handed over to him in November of 1403 and completed in 1424, his subject is the story of the New Testament; and so pleased were the *Operai* with this work that in January of the same year the second gate by his hand (the third in all) was entrusted to him, to face the Cathedral, and to contain the story of the Old Testament. It may be noted here that this gate—*verso S. Maria del Fiore*—was of bronze gilt, as stated in the records; and, in fact, the gilding may still be traced in many places. It must be remembered that we are dealing here with three doors in all, the first being by that fine master of his art, Andrea Pisano, treating—very appropriately in a door to the Baptistery—the story of S. John Baptist: they form a series of twenty reliefs in all, inscribed *Andreas Ugolini Nini de Pisis me fecit*, A.D. 1330. There is no doubt possible about the superbly fine achievement here of the great Giottesque sculptor, who was probably trained under Giovanni Pisano. "No Florentine sculptor"—I have written elsewhere of this work—"can have felt the pure beauty of form more intensely than the craftsman of this southern gate of the Baptistery"; and I noticed here especially the superb *Christ of the Baptism*, the *Cardinal Virtues*, and such groups as the *Salutation*.

There can be no question but that Ghiberti was profoundly attracted and influenced by this earlier door; and, in fact, I find that his *Annunciation*, *Nativity* and *Baptism of Christ* are modelled closely on the Pisan's treatment; while he followed the general scheme of design, and, as Vasari remarks, the arrangement of the panels with ornament around is similar to that of Andrea in the first gate. Their number is twenty: beneath

these are the figures of the four Evangelists and four Doctors of the Church, the framework is enriched with ivy leaves and foliage, and " on each angle a male or female head in full relief, representing the Prophets or Sybils, very beautiful and showing in their variety the excellence of Lorenzo's talent." [1] Therefore Symonds is justified in calling this first of Lorenzo's two doors " the supreme achievement of bronze-casting in the Tuscan prime " ; and no less so in his criticism of the second of these doors, dealing with Old Testament story, in which the artist deliberately abandoned the restrictions of the earlier art of bronze relief, in saying that " by the introduction of elaborate landscape, and massing of figures in multitudes at the three and four distances Ghiberti overstepped the limits that separate sculpture from painting."

We must remember that in this very time at Florence the new science of perspective had been discovered, and had carried all before it. Brunelleschi himself was an adept, and had painted two perspectives, one of the temple of S. Giovanni from without, the other of the Piazza and Palace of the Signoria. He had imparted his knowledge of the new science to Ghiberti ; and it may be here noted that among the latter's assistants in this second gate were Benozzo Gozzoli, with that Paolo Doni, called Uccello, who was later a fanatical admirer of perspective, though here only as yet *garzone* in the workshop ; and that Lorenzo himself had been actually painting at Pesaro, when called away by his stepfather to the great commission on which he was now engaged.

Therefore we seem here to find in this second gate the pictorial element in his art reasserting itself, under the special attraction of this new art of perspective. The

[1] Cf. Vasari, " Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed Architettellori." Vol. II. (Lorenzo Ghiberti.)

result was a brilliant achievement, which completely overwhelmed his contemporaries ("*Questa stupendissima opera*," is Vasari's comment), and gained from Michelangelo himself the famous saying that these Gates were worthy to be those of Paradise. How surpassingly beautiful indeed they must have appeared when first disclosed, in all the brilliance of the gilded bronze, in the sunlight of that open space before the Duomo! The first of Ghiberti's gates, dealing with the New Testament, was then moved to its present position, and the second given the place it now holds facing S. Maria del Fiore, while Pisano's gate is actually used for entrance to the Baptistery. These (second) Ghiberti gates, which are not used, are very properly guarded with fencing: but though it might be open to criticism to restore the gilding (traces of which are visible) here, it would be surely possible to keep them, by judicious cleaning at regular periods, cleaner than they generally are, from the dust and dirt of the Piazza.

This second gate was commissioned, as I have said, immediately after the completion of the first, and Vasari's account is that the consuls of the Arte de' Mercatanti "placed it in his hands, saying that they gave him full permission (*licenza*) to make it as he willed, and how he should think it might turn out more ornate, more rich, more perfect and more beautiful than could be imagined, nor should he consider time or expense." As a matter of fact, however, the selection of subjects seems to have been entrusted—as was often the case—to a scholar, here the great Florentine scholar and Humanist Leonardo Bruni, Chancellor of the Republic, who has already (Chap. II) come under our notice. Leonardo's letter on the subject to the *Spettabili Uomini*, Niccolo da Uzzano and his companions, still exists, and is worth quoting. "I consider that the

GATE OF FLORENTINE BAPTISTERY
(STORY OF OLD TESTAMENT)

By Lorenzo Ghiberti

stories of the new gate, which you have decided shall be of the Old Testament, must have two features—one, principally that they shall be illustrative, the other, that they be significant. Illustrative, I call those which will feed the eye with variety of design: significant, which have some importance as worthy of memory. Presuming these two things I have chosen, according to my judgment, ten subjects . . . besides these stories I have selected eight Prophets, as you will see." Of course, admitting the evidence of this letter, as Milanesi points out, "to Ghiberti was left the care of the execution"—that is to say that, keeping within the scheme of subjects, he had a pretty free hand as to treatment; and here it is interesting to notice a fact which came to my knowledge last year when visiting the cathedral of Pistoja, where is to be seen in the Chapel of S. James, on the right of the choir, the rich silver altar executed in the middle of the fourteenth century.

The treatment of Bible story by Italian Masters was always, to a large extent, traditional—as was pointed out very effectively by my friend the late Mr. Grant Allen; and here in the scenes of the Old Testament, attributed to Piero di Lessandro of Florence, in 1357, I was reminded strongly of the door of the Baptistery which I had just visited. Especially was this the case in this older Master's version of the *Creation of Man*, of his *Eve drawn from Adam's Side* and the *Temptation;* and to a less extent in the scenes of the *Expulsion from Eden* and his quaint rendering of the building of the Ark.

These *Gates of Paradise* will always remain Lorenzo Ghiberti's life-work and supreme masterpiece—the expression of his harmonious spirit (above all in the panels of the *Creation of Woman* and the *Visit to Abraham of the Angels*), of his dream of the antique beauty and his sure

craftsmanship: but even apart from these doors he was doing some very valuable work outside in his figures for the different Guilds of Florence—the Cloth-dealers, Bankers, Wool-staplers—in their niches still without Or San Michele, in his monumental work of S. Maria Novella and S. Croce, and his sarcophagus of S. Zenobius (1446), still in the Duomo of Florence. Besides his work in sculpture he had been brought up by his excellent step-father, Bartoluccio, to the goldsmith's art, and was, in fact, himself one of the finest goldsmiths of his time. Famous, above all, was his mitre of Pope Martin V, and no less so the tiara which he made for Pope Eugenius IV when at Florence, in 1439, for the Council of the two Churches, with Christ and the Virgin surrounded by angels, the figures worked in gold with great pearls, "the which was valued" (Vasari) "with the jewels set therein at thirty thousand ducats of gold." I have said elsewhere that probably both these mitres may have been melted down for Pope Clement by Cellini during that terrible sack of Rome: but Cellini, himself no mean judge of this art, had set down his judgment that Ghiberti was a true goldsmith, a great craftsman, who, though he did large work, was at his best in the small.[1]

Most wonderful, perhaps, of all must have been the great cornelian, which was said to have been once Nero's seal, and bore on it carved the story of Apollo and Marsyas—"a thing rare in beauty, which Giovanni" (de' Medici, says Vasari) "gave to Lorenzo that he should set around it, in gold, a graven ornament, and he toiled at it

[1] "*Lorenzo Ghiberti fu veramente orefice, si alla gentil maniera del suo bel fare, e maggiormente a quella infinita pulitezza ed estrema diligenza . . . e sebbene egli alcuna volta si messe a fare delle grandi, imperò si vide ch'egli era molto più la sua professione in farle piccole*, etc." V, the Introduction to Cellini's "Trattato dell' Orificeria," quoted by Milanesi.

CREATION, TEMPTATION AND EXPULSION FROM PARADISE
By Lorenzo Ghiberti

VISIT OF ANGELS AND ABRAHAM AND ISAAC
[Panels, Baptistery of Florence

many months, and finished it all," setting it between the wings of a golden dragon, who crouched among ivy leaves. If all this wondrous goldsmith's work is gone, to our great loss (probably in the troublous time later, through the value of the material), the windows remain, the great lights which he, with Donatello, made for Florence Duomo, and which yet fill the shadowy spaces of that vast interior with their rich glow of golden colour. A man of wide culture, he had formed his own collection, which he left to his heir, of " many antiques of marble and bronze, which he had had brought over from Greece at no small expense," among which was the " bed of Polycletus, a very rare thing, a bronze leg, life-size, and some heads of women and men, with certain vases ; " and his Commentaries on the history of Art, though criticized by Vasari (who was doing the same thing himself) with some justice, is yet of interest and value for reference, as I have found in my own studies.[1]

For these men of the earlier time under Cosimo de' Medici were giants : they caught the divine flame, and left the torch to be carried on—but by weaker hands. No less great—in some respects even greater—was Lorenzo's contemporary and rival in the *Gates of S. Giovanni*, Filippo Brunelleschi, whom we left, with his lifelong friend and intimate, the sculptor Donatello, returning to Rome after the award had given the Baptistery doors to Lorenzo Ghiberti. " And because," says Vasari of

[1] Ghiberti, for instance, records here his appreciation of that great Sienese Master, Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Vasari calls it " a work in the vulgar tongue, of such sort that little profit can be got out of it . . . and then, in the process of writing (like one who knew better how to draw or carve or cast in bronze than to compose stories) speaking of himself he always use the first person—" I made, I said it, I did or spoke." " The MS. of these " Commentari," in three parts, probably by the hand of Ghiberti himself, is preserved in the Biblioteca Magliabechiana.

this visit, " Filippo was free from family cares, he gave himself entirely to his studies, and cared not for eating and drinking ; his whole mind was set upon architecture . . . and he had within himself two very great conceptions, one of which was to bring to light good architecture, thinking that in finding it he would leave no less good memory of himself than had done Cimabue and Giotto ; and the other to find some method, if it could be done, to raise the vaulting of the cupola of Santa Maria del Fiore of Florence. . . . Nor did he speak of this his intention to Donato nor to any living soul ; yet did he not fail when in Rome to think out the difficulties connected with the vaulting of the Rotonda " (the Pantheon).[1]

Immersed in their studies, caring but little for aught else, we may picture to ourselves these two inspired messengers of a new art, drawing, measuring, noting carefully those wonderful ruins of the past Empire city— " every kind of building, temples, round and square or octagonal, basilicas, aqueducts, baths, arches, coliseums, amphitheatres and every kind of temple of bricks. . . . It was then that he put into their places, order by order, the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian : and so deep went his study that his genius remained fully capable of seeing in imagination Rome, as she was before she was ruined." The common folk of Rome, seeing these two absorbed students " when they passed through the streets, without attention to their dress or appearance, were wont to call them ' they of the treasure ' (*quelli del tesoro*) ; the people believing that they were persons who sought by divination (*geomanzia*) to recover treasures ; the reason of this being that they had found one day an antique jar,

[1] Vasari (op. cit.) adds here—" by good architecture I mean the antique good orders, not the German and barbarian " (i.e. the Gothic), " which was used in that time " : i.e. the revival of architecture based the antique.

full of medals." But the treasure they sought was other than this; and such as would enrich not themselves alone, but the world of their own time and of ourselves. Donato had now returned home, but his elder friend remained, occupied as described above: and this period of intense and concentrated study was priceless to his later creation. Vasari may have taken, and amplified, the interesting account of Brunelleschi's stay in Rome, which I have just quoted, from the life of the Master by Manetti: and it may be observed that many of the antique buildings which he then studied—and which I have seen myself reproduced in the plans and drawings of contemporaries—would seem to have since disappeared.

What may have been an attack of malaria put an end for a time to this wonderful life of study in 1407, when Filippo, counselled by his friends to take a change of air, returned to Florence; though Vasari is perhaps wrong in placing in the same year the gathering of architects and engineers, with the Operai of Santa Maria del Fiore and the Consuls of the Arte della Lana, to consider again the great question of raising the cupola of the Cathedral, which, as Milanesi has stated, was in the year 1417. In that year, as Venturi has shown, Filippo was back in his own city, at forty years of age, and busied on the problem of the cupola; though the actual competition for the best design was proclaimed by the Operai in August of 1418, and continued until December of that same year. Nothing was even then decided, and in the spring following there came a further examination of the designs—all the citizens of Florence being invited to give their opinion—and yet further discussion. The problem of how to raise into space the vast cupola was the difficulty; and Brunelleschi, fresh from his studies in Rome, where no doubt he had studied the Pantheon, gave his firm verdict

again against all the others that this could be done, and best done, without artificial strengthening (*senza armadura*). The controversy which followed, and which is given at length by Vasari, is a wonderful and inspiring instance of the triumph of one man's will and genius against misconception, jealousy and every kind of opposition.

At one point in the discussion he was even removed bodily from the conclave by the servants of the Operai "holding him for an absolute madman" (*tenendolo del tutto pazzo*) because he persisted in his reasoned opinion; and poor Filippo was ashamed to go about Florence, and always it seemed to him that men were saying behind his back "Look, there goes the madman!" (*vede colà quel pazzo!*)[1] "To speak of the cupola of the Duomo," says Symonds, "as a simple revival of Roman taste would be inappropriate. It remains a *tour de force* of individual genius, cultivated by the experience of Gothic vault-building and penetrated with the greatness of Imperial Rome. Its spirit of dauntless audacity and severe concentration alone is antique."[2] And slowly Filippo, with his invincible faith in his own scheme, with the failure of all others to solve the problem, was winning Florence to his side. Already in April of 1420 the opposition was breaking down, the approval of Brunelleschi sought for; and in the same month he was nominated, with Lorenzo Ghiberti and Battista d'Antonio, as the *provedditori* (overseers) for the construction of the cupola.

The appointment of Ghiberti seems to have been a most unfortunate one, due to professional jealousy, and a bitter blow to Brunelleschi. He had fought so splendidly for his design, the completion of his life work as an

[1] Cf. Vasari (op. cit.) Filippo Brunelleschi.
[2] Cf. Symonds (op. cit.) "The Fine Arts." Chapter II.

THE CUPOLA OF FLORENCE DUOMO

By Filippo Brunelleschi

architect; and he now saw its credit taken from him in part, and given to another—and that other his successful rival in the Baptistery competition. "In what despair and bitterness," says Vasari, "did Filippo find himself when he came to know what the Operai had done may be gathered from the fact that he was on the point of making his escape from Florence; and had it not been for Donato and Luca della Robbia, who comforted him, he was near to going out of his mind. It is truly wicked and cruel fury of those who, blinded by envy, put in peril the honour and fine works which a worthy ambition has achieved: it certainly was not their fault that Filippo had not broken up his models, burnt his drawings, and in less than half an hour destroyed that work and labour which had occupied him for many years. The Operai made excuses and sought to comfort him to go forward, saying that he, and no other, was the inventor and author of the great *fabbrica;* but at the same time they gave Lorenzo the same salary as Filippo."

There followed years of wrangling and cross purposes, given at length by Vasari, whose tendency to make a good story must not, however, be forgotten. Evidently Ghiberti, a great master in his own line, was here the wrong man and in the way. Still the work went forward, after all, as Brunelleschi had planned it. Commenced on August 7th of 1420, it was completed on August 30th of 1436, when all the bells of Florence rang out, and the "Te Deum was sung, and in the Divine Office thanks were given to the Lord who had permitted the work to be achieved"; and in the year following Leo Battista Alberti, dedicating his Treatise, "De Pictura," to his friend, Brunelleschi, could write the words—"who so hard and envious that he would not praise Pippo the

architect, when he saw a structure so vast as this climbing into the heavens, wide enough to cover with its shadow all the peoples of Tuscany, made without help of beams or strengthening of wood; such a work of art, if I judge aright, as in this our own time would hardly be believed, and perhaps even the ancient world would not have known how to accomplish."

For Giovanni d'Averardo de' Medici Brunelleschi had renewed the old building of S. Lorenzo; and when Giovanni had died, in 1429, this work was continued under the patronage of his sons, Cosimo and Lorenzo. "Brunelleschi," says Symonds, "in 1425 designed the Basilica of S. Lorenzo after an original but truly classic type, remarkable for its sobriety and correctness. What he had learned from the ruins of Rome he here applied in obedience to his own artistic instinct. S. Lorenzo is a columnar edifice with round arches and semicircular apses. . . . It is a masterpiece of intelligent Renaissance adaptation." The same remark would apply to S. Spirito, built after the Master's death, but from his designs; while at the same time that he was busied on S. Lorenzo he must have been working on the Palazzo della Parte Guelfa—which, set in the very centre of old Florence, has lately been intelligently restored to house the fine library founded by Vieusseux—and even earlier (1420) had designed the beautiful Portico of the Hospital, so elegant in its proportions, which his friend, Luca della Robbia, came to enrich further, by setting in the roundels between the arches that fascinating series of their baby occupants.

I shall return to these in speaking of Luca's work in my next chapter: but, architecturally, this colonnade, in its serenity and simplicity, is scarcely less typical of Brunelleschi than is his creation of the Chapel of the

THE CHAPEL OF THE PAZZI

By Filippo Brunelleschi] [*Cloister of S. Croce*

Pazzi within S. Croce of Florence. These Pazzi were a rich family of Florentine merchants and bankers, whose name will come before us later in connection with a sinister and terrible conspiracy; but at this time, with a name famous in the story of their city, and immensely rich, they held a position almost equal to that of the Medici themselves, and like them were generous patrons of the arts.

This Chapel of the Pazzi is a little gem of early Renaissance architecture, as seen through the individual genius of Brunelleschi. Venturi has described it as being among the Master's most refined creations in its noble constructive simplicity; and has compared its decorative treatment, especially in the windows and main entrance, with the Ducal Palace of Urbino, which—probably erected by Laurana, with Francesco di Giorgio's assistance in the detail—belongs to the same style and century. Donatello, as we shall see later, was helping him here, with Desiderio da Settignano and his friend, Luca della Robbia. The entablature of the façade, broken by a wide arch, is supported by six beautiful Corinthian columns; and the interior, with its domed roof, is characteristic of this period of Renaissance architecture. The delicious winged cherub heads in roundels on the front of the façade are by Desiderio; and it is of special interest to notice here that Venturi, while he gives the medallions of the Saints, as generally accepted, to Luca della Robbia, considers that the four medallions of the Evangelists,—which are markedly different in character, and which he compares in detail with the *Crucifix* of S. Maria Novella and the *Sacrifice of Abraham* (panel),—are by no other than Brunelleschi himself. The suggestion is of interest and value; since Filippo's work in sculpture, though of fine quality is,

relatively speaking, rare. We may recall here Vasari's story of his criticism of Donatello's *Christ*, to whom he said that it was a "rustic put upon the cross" (*uno contadino in croce*), and provoked the retort, "Take a piece of wood, and do one yourself." The figure which he made in reply, and which still hangs in the Gaddi Chapel, to the left of the choir of S. Maria Novella, possesses such masterly modelling and dignity of conception that Donatello owned himself willingly beaten: and here, in this Chapel of the Pazzi, the seated Evangelists, notably the S. Luke, have an intensity of feeling, a sharp precision of form, which contrasts with the suavity of the Robbia figures.

Brunelleschi was appreciated and loved by the Medici rulers, especially by Cosimo, who, though he had rejected his design for his own Palace as too grandiose, used his services both in S. Lorenzo and in the rebuilding of the Badia. But for Luca Pitti the Master designed that Palace, which, carried out by Luca Fancelli, yet wins our admiration in its superbly massive character, set round with great blocks of unhewn stone, and fine proportions, Roman in its simplicity and strength. The man was a giant in his art, simple and sincere in his character, famous for his wit: above all this—all that he achieved and has bequeathed us as a great sculptor-architect, the friend of Donatello and Alberti, perhaps the greatest figure in a great time, whose repulses only strengthened his achievement and quickened his genius —he is for us an initiator. Like the scholars in another field, he lifts the veil which covered the immortal past; and, in its fresh beauty, reveals to us the wonder of a new and living style.

CRUCIFIX CARVED IN WOOD

By Filippo Brunelleschi] [*Church of S. M. Novella, Florence*

CHAPTER IV

DONATO, DELLA ROBBIA, MICHELOZZO

AMONG that little group of intimates who surrounded Brunelleschi in his life at Rome and Florence there has come before us more than once in the last chapter the figure of Donato, son of Niccolo di Betto Bardi. "Donato," says Vasari, "who was called by his friends Donatello and has so signed himself in some of his works, was born in Florence in the year 1383." On this point there is a variation in the statement of the tax return (*catasto*) between 1382, 1386 and 1387, but we may take the year 1386, and not that given by Vasari, as the date of Donato's birth now generally accepted; and another statement of Vasari, that he was one of the competitors for the Baptistery gates, cannot be securely received—though he was no doubt present there beside his friend Brunelleschi, and, then still a lad, must have gained inspiration from this stimulating contest.[1] He lived until 1468—a life filled with splendid creative work, which was of immense value to Florentine sculpture by counteracting, in its strongly realistic character, what has been called the "pernicious" effect of Ghiberti's brilliant and most attractive treatment of relief. He worked a good deal

[1] Vasari, in the "Life of Ghiberti," speaks of Donatello's work for the gates as if he had certain information. On the other hand in his own "Life of Donatello" he does not mention it at all, and at the time of the competition Donato would still have been only a lad of seventeen.

together with his intimate friend, Brunelleschi, with whom he was in close sympathy ; but he had assistance in other works from the great sculptor-architect, Michelozzo—with whom also Luca della Robbia joined himself as collaborator,—while Maso di Bartolommeo, called Masaccio, and Pagno di Lapo Portigiani often gave their help.

The two tendencies which seem to me most directly impressive in Donato's art creations are what I have just called his realism, the close intense study of the actual model before him ; and at the same time the idealistic quality of his work, typically expressed, though in different directions, in two immortal figures, the *S. George* and the *David*. "Donatello," says Symonds very justly, "with the uncompromising candour of an artist bent on marking character, felt that he was bound to seize the very pith and kernel of his subject. If a Magdalen were demanded of him he would not condescend to model a Venus, and then place a book and skull on a rock beside her ; nor did he imagine that the bloom and beauty of a laughing Faun were fitting attributes for the preacher of repentance." [1] Donato goes, in fact, almost too far in the direction of realistic study in the wooden figure of the Magdalen, which I saw last year in the Opera del Duomo of Florence, where it had been brought from the Baptistery,—an emaciated female figure, clothed in her hair and almost repulsive in its conception, which seemed to have been whitewashed over and coloured to its further detriment ; and Vasari tells us that the sculptor while working on

[1] The attractive *S. Mary Magdalen*, by G. L. Bernini, in the Cathedral of Siena might be taken, in some measure, as an instance of this treatment of the subject : in his reference to S. John Baptist the writer must be obviously alluding to the painting of that Saint by Leonardo, now in the Musée du Louvre.

his figure of David, called *Lo Zuccone*, for the Campanile of Santa Maria del Fiore was wont to bid him speak, or again, when he would make a solemn assurance, would say—" By the faith that I place in my Zuccone."

But this passion for truth to real life and nature, which finds expression also in the grandly ascetic bronze *Baptist* of Siena, which gives life and movement to his groups of laughing children at Prato or Florence, is met (as I suggested above) and counteracted by a no less strong impulse ; and in the union, even the conflict, of these two impulses lies the secret of his creative art. For we have just seen him, an inspired youth, at Brunelleschi's side in Rome, searching out the message which the antique world had to offer to his new age. For the new Palace of Cosimo, which was then being built in Via Larga and adorned, he designed those relief medallions—copied or adapted from antique gems—which are still in their place in the first *cortile* as we enter : inspired thus directly by the antique these eight medallions in marble, illustrating the stories of Hercules, Diomed, Ariadne at Naxos, a Centaur and other subjects, " walled in " (Vasari) " above the frieze between the windows of the architrave above the arches of the Loggia "—deserve our attentive study. Vasari tells us at the same time of a figure of Marsyas—" in white antique marble set at the exit of the garden "—which the Master had restored, as well as a great number of antique heads ; and adds that his influence was powerful in awakening in Cosimo de' Medici the wish to introduce into Florence the treasures of antique art, which came to fill the Casa Medici at this period.

The Palazzo Medici must indeed at this time—and later under Lorenzo himself, when Galeazzo Sforza came from Milan to visit the Medici and was astonished

at what he saw—have been full of works of priceless beauty, many of which seem to have disappeared for ever when that Palace was plundered on the fall of Piero de' Medici. The group of *Judith and Holofernes* was then (1495) transferred to the Palace of the Signoria, where it was standing at the time of Savonarola's death, with the inscription (a warning to future tyrants) "*Exemplum Salutis publicæ cives posuere.* MCCCCXCV." In 1504 it was removed to the Loggia dei Lanzi, whence it has been moved recently to the front of the Palace.[1]

"In the courtyard of the Palace of the Signori," says Vasari, "is to be found of bronze a naked *David* of life size, who has cut off Goliath's head, and, raising one foot, places it on the head, while in his right hand he holds a sword—a work which is so natural in its living character (*vivacità*) and softness of flesh (*morbidezza*) that it seems to the craftsmen impossible that it had not been cast from the living model. This statue stood of old in the Cortile of the Casa Medici, and through the exile of Cosimo (Vecchio) was brought into the place I have just mentioned. To-day our Duke Cosimo having made a fountain where the statue was has taken it away."[2] The figure was completed in August of 1416, in the same year that the Master carved his *S. George* for the shrine of Or San Michele, when he was just thirty years of age and coming to the full of his power. In this *David* realism is forgotten, or at least subordinated

[1] Vasari says this was commissioned by the Signori to be placed in the Loggia, which is of course incorrect: nor does this group altogether justify his laudatory words—"*Opera di grande eccellenza e magisterio.*" Symonds has called it "a work that illustrates the clumsiness of realistic treatment"; but the handling of the pedestal, with its winged "amorini," is altogether attractive and characteristic.

[2] This statue found its way later into the Uffizi Gallery, and is now in the Donatello room at the Museo Nazionale; while the fountain in the Cortile of the Palazzo de' Signori is surmounted by Verrochio's delicious baby figure holding a dolphin.

DAVID TRIUMPHANT OVER GOLIATH
(BRONZE)

By Donatello] [*Museo Nazionale of Florence*

to the inrush of the antique beauty, which here floods the Master's creative spirit; yet "this boy hero of a marvellous romance" is entirely individual, drawn out of life and the artist's own imaginative conception. The nude is here treated with absolute mastery in a work of first importance, and perhaps for the first time so since the antique sculptors. The modelling of the boyish form—the torso, the limbs clad in greaves, the arm and closed hand—is very subtle; a low broad-brimmed helmet, twined with vine leaves, casts its shadow over the pensive young face. Donatello never surpassed this wonderful bronze, nor in its own way has it ever been surpassed at any time; in the other *David*, also mentioned by Vasari, "of most beautiful marble with the dead Goliath head beneath his feet," also now in the Museo Nazionale, that purely realistic side of his art has reasserted itself.

Entirely different is that mailed marble figure of *S. George*, firmly planted on his feet, every line of his form "indicative of the cool resolve which assures triumph," which stood until lately in the niche for which it was designed outside Or San Michele, but has now been transferred to the Museo Nazionale. "For the Arte de' Corazzai," says Vasari, "he made a figure of S. George armed, most living; in whose head is to be discovered the beauty of youth, a spirit and a valour in arms, a fine and terrible feeling of life (*vivacità*) and a wonderful gesture of movement within the stone."

In connection with this marble figure of the Christian soldier, "ready to engage Apollyon in battle to the death," it is of value to approach the subject of Donato's achievement as an architect. Manetti, when writing of the two friends at Rome, seems in some measure to contradict himself when he says that with Brunelleschi

he was occupied in studying, measuring and certifying the ancient buildings, but that Donatello never opened his eyes to architecture (*Donatello, senza mai aprir gli all' architettura*). That on the contrary he was profoundly influenced by his studies at that time we shall be able to trace here; but the process was not a rapid one. "With difficulty," says Venturi, "could the young sculptor have been able at first to form to himself as clear an idea of the antique as he did later; the classic influence, to his mind, which naturally turned to Gothic forms, could not be immediate or sudden. Not a lightning flash but the light of dawn, slowly becoming more living, more clear, was what the antique was to Donatello." In the beautiful niche which enshrines this glorious *S. George*, the side columns and exquisite pointed arch are still Gothic in their inspiration, and as such entirely appropriate; yet it is interesting to note that in the support below a new influence is already foreshadowed; while in the relief, where the armed knight on his curving steed rides against the dragon while the kneeling maiden watches the combat, the Master has imaged forth one of his most exquisite creations.

On the other hand, in the niche which encloses Verocchio's later group of *Christ and S. Thomas*, the new forms of the Renaissance style appear already developed, making almost a break with the tradition of the earlier Gothic building. As an architect, Donatello, when working with Brunelleschi, and later with Michelozzo, came under their restraining influence, while when alone (the *ciborium* of S. Peter's may be an instance among others) he is more emotional, his fancy more unrestrained.

To attempt any complete notice of the Master's rich creation would exceed the place I can assign him in this chapter. I can only here attempt a brief survey, com-

ST. GEORGE
(IN MARBLE)

By Donatello] [*Museo Nazionale, Florence*
Formerly on Or San Michele

mencing with that beautiful *Annunciation* at Santa Croce, with its richly ornate frame, which Vasari mentions first among his early works, but which modern criticism is disposed to place on his return from a later visit to Rome, when his mind was still filled with those "tumultuous impressions of the antique world." With an exquisite grace the maiden turns to receive the kneeling angel; the dark stone used lends itself to decoration, and the architectural element is here strongly marked.

I have already alluded to the figures which Donatello executed for the façade fronting the Campanile of the Cathedral of Florence—notably his *David and Jeremiah* —as showing his feeling for character and his close study of nature; while within the same building upon the organ loft is his relief of dancing children, which had been commissioned by the Commune of Florence in 1443; and, like Ghiberti, he had designed one of the windows of the cupola. Beyond Florence his work is of great importance at Prato, Siena and Padua. At Prato he was working on her pulpit with Michelozzo, and the result is a masterpiece. The pulpit is outside the Duomo, with a panelled roof or *baldacchino* set above it, and supported beneath by a beautiful capital of bronze. In this work Michelozzo was assisting him,[1] partly carrying out the construction of the cover or *baldacchino*, and probably casting the beautiful capital just mentioned; but I believe that to Donatello alone is due the wonderful dance of children around the pulpit, inspired perhaps by memories of some antique vase or urn, and to be compared with the no less beautiful relief of dancing children of his famous *cantoria* or organ loft, above mentioned, of Florence Cathedral, now preserved in the Opera del Duomo. His too—I feel certain after careful

[1] Cf. Adolfo Venturi, "Storia dell'Arte." Vol. VIII, Chapter IV.

study—must have been the exquisite detail of this bronze capital supporting the Prato pulpit, where I admired especially the figure of a winged Love holding a scroll.

Siena, for political reasons, was hostile to Florence, and closed for the most part to this wonderful movement of Florentine art of the fifteenth century. But here one exception must be made, this being in favour of Donatello, whose influence there I believe to have been real and lasting—derived, of course, from such work as his bronze relief of the Baptistery of San Giovanni, where, after the dance of Salome, Herod starts back in horror as the Baptist's head is brought to him, and where his, too, are the figures of *Hope* and *Faith* upon the font; while the superbly ascetic figure of S. John the Baptist, in bronze, within the Cathedral itself, is a masterpiece of his art.

Far greater, however, and more direct was the Master's influence at Padua, an influence which probably affected very deeply the genius of Mantegna, and reached even the Venetians. The superb altar which he erected there for the great church of S. Antonio was dispersed in 1576, but has now been re-constructed. Here, in the figures which adorn it, all his exuberant energy, all his sense of classic beauty find full and free expression. Most of all I admired here the Pietà, and the twelve angels of bronze playing and singing; while in the open space outside the Basilica still stands untouched his grandly conceived figure of the Condottiere Gattamelata—the first great equestrian statue of the Renaissance, inspired very probably by the mounted figure of Marcus Aurelius now on the Capitol at Rome, and as probably itself an inspiration for the even grander Condottiere Colleoni, the leader of the armies of the most Serene Republic of Venice. Here, the General astride of his great charger,

ST. LAWRENCE
(TERRA COTTA BUST)

By Donatello] [*Old Sacristy of S. Lorenzo, Florence*

holds out the baton of command; beneath, on the pedestal, above a door suggesting the gateway of another life, two naked male genii in marble support the shield and helmet of the hero. "The art of Donatello," says Venturi, "had its triumph at Padua. More than from the teaching of Squarcione painting drew its monumental character from the great Florentine; and sculpture at Venice, in Dalmatia, at Verona, Mantua, Ferrara turned to repeat his message." The Paduans would fain have kept him, with every sort of caress, offering him their citizenship; but "he," says Vasari, "decided that he would return to Florence, telling them that if he stayed with them longer he would forget all he knew, being so praised by everyone; while in his own land being continually criticized (*biasimato*) that same blame gave to him reason for study, and consequently of greater glory." So he returned to Florence, now an old man, to work on the pulpit of San Lorenzo, where in the Sacristy is still his terra-cotta bust of *S. Lawrence*, marvellous in its sureness and truth of modelling; and, leaving the bronze reliefs of the great pulpit to be completed by his pupil, Bertoldo, he died full of years and fame on December 13th, of 1466, and was buried within San Lorenzo, near the tomb of Cosimo de' Medici, the generous patron he so loved—"as he had himself" (Vasari) "desired, so that his dead body might be near to him, as when alive he had always been very near to him in spirit."

Luca della Robbia belongs to this period—with Brunelleschi, Ghiberti and Donatello—which Perrens justly considers as the greatest creative period in Tuscan art; born in 1400, he was working at Florence on his beautiful relief of the organ loft when Brunelleschi's genius was in the ascendant. Like Donatello, Luca

worked in collaboration with the architect Michelozzo —as for instance within the chapel in San Miniato del Monte (1446), which Michelozzo designed for Piero de' Medici ; and again, in this ancient church, in the ceiling decorations of the chapel of San Giacomo, which contains Rosselino's beautiful recumbent figure of the Cardinal of Portugal, and yet again they were working together in the collegiate church of Impruneta. Luca della Robbia was, of course, an accomplished sculptor of high repute before he ever touched the exquisite glazed pottery with which we instinctively associate his name : such indeed he must have been to receive the commission to continue the reliefs of Giotto and Andrea Pisano around the Campanile of Florence Duomo. " For the Campanile of that church " (Vasari) " he made five subjects of marble which are on the side towards the church " (which were wanting to Giotto's design), " beside the sciences and arts which Andrea Pisano had made. In the first Luca made Donatus giving instruction in Grammar, in the second Plato and Aristotle for Philosophy, in the third one is playing the lute " (this is the figure of Orpheus), " in the fourth Ptolemy for Astronomy " (this is here called Astrologia), " in the fifth Euclid for Geometry, the which subjects for finish, grace and design are an advance on those made by Giotto."

These five subjects, commissioned in 1437, were completed and paid for in 1440 (a hundred florins of gold was the full sum arranged). There followed the yet more important commission for the panels of the organ loft for the same Cathedral, assigned, through Messer Piero de' Medici's influence, by the Opera del Duomo to Luca as well as to Donatello—" of which work " (Vasari) " Luca made in certain subjects the choirs of music who sing in

different manner, and put such study into the work and so well succeeded in it that we can almost perceive the swelling of the throat of those who sing, and the beating of the hands of those who are conducting the music upon the shoulders of their lesser companions."

Both these works are in the Opera del Duomo, where in studying them I found more richness of design and vigour of movement in the relief of Donatello, more suavity and charm in these figures of the singing boys and girls of Luca. But here the criticism of Vasari, who saw them both *in situ* (for they were not removed from the Duomo until 1688) appears to me absolutely sound—" seeing that experience makes us know that all things which are seen at a distance, be they paintings or sculpture or anything of a similar nature, have a finer effect and greater force if they are a beautiful study (*una bella bozza*) than if they are finished : and besides the distance giving this effect it seems that often in such studies, born as if it were suddenly out of the passion (*furore*) of art, the conception of the Master is expressed in a few strokes." These words explain very justly the merit of Donato's work, which perhaps loses—while the other may possibly gain—by being seen (as now seen) on the eye level at a near distance ; but Luca was a very finished sculptor, as we may see from the work just mentioned, as well as from his beautiful monument to Bishop Federighi (originally in San Pancrazio, now in Santa Trinità) with its frame of fruit and flowers—where we may trace Donatello's influence, but here more reserved and restrained ; and yet again in the tabernacle of Santa Maria at Peretola, outside Florence, and in his bronze work of the doors of the Sagrestia Nuova of the Florence Cathedral.

But he had now turned his attention to the invention of glazed terra-cotta " considering that the clay is easily

handled" (Vasari), "and that all that was wanted was to find a means by which it could be protected from the injuries of time; wherefore, having made many experiments, he found a method of glazing which arrived excellently at this result, and made the work of clay almost eternal." [1] In this glaze he made (1443) the *Resurrection* and *Ascension of Christ* over the door of the Sacristry of Florence Duomo, and, says Vasari, for his patron "the Magnificent Piero di Cosimo de' Medici, one of the first who made Luca to work in coloured earthenware, all the roof of the writing-room in the Palace built by Cosimo his father, with varying fancies, and in like manner the façade—the which was a thing unique (*cosa singolare*) and very useful for the summer." This room is also mentioned in the manuscript of Filarete's "Treatise of Architecture," whence Vasari may have got his information: it has entirely disappeared, though the medallions of the twelve months in the Victoria and Albert Museum may have formed a part of it.

It lies beyond the scope of this volume to detail all the beautiful terra-cotta work which came from Luca's hands; for very soon he found himself overwhelmed with commissions, and brought in others of his family to help him, among whom the best craftsman was his nephew Andrea. Among Luca's own work the roundel of the Arms of the Guilds of Florence at Or San Michele, his work above mentioned at San Miniato, in the Duomo, the Pazzi Chapel at Santa Croce, the lunette of the *Virgin and Child* in the Via del Agnolo, the lovely children in the medallions without the Hospital of the Inno-

[1] Vasari mentions that the glazing was made of stagno, terraghetta, antimonio and other minerals blended together with the fire of a specially prepared furnace. The secret was lost after the death of Girolamo della Robbia, and "art deprived of the true method of working in this glaze."

THE VISITATION

By Luca della Robbia] [*S. Giovanni Fuor-Civitas, Pistoja*

cents, above all the beautiful *Visitation*—a group in the round—of San Giovanni Fuor Civitas at Pistoia are to be especially noticed. The lover of this charming della Robbia work, and more directly of the art of Andrea, will do well to visit—after the Museo Nazionale and Florence herself—Pistoia, Prato, Arezzo and La Verna; but gradually colour was introduced, and the work became coarser, more florid in treatment and more commercial. But Luca had confined himself to white on pale blue; and achieved his success by mastery of modelling, combined with a fine reserve of treatment. Very subtle, unique and haunting is the charm which still lives in these pensive Madonnas, who come to us from a world above our own: and Luca has been well called "a master in the art of rendering evanescent moments of expression, the most fragile subtleties of the emotions."

This devotional spirit asserts itself throughout even the later Robbia work, and Vasari tells us that two sons of Andrea became monks in San Marco—"being received into orders by the Reverend Fra San Girolamo Savonarola, to whom these della Robbia were always very devoted, and drew his portrait upon the medals that are seen to this day." [1] The last of the della Robbia seems to have been Girolamo, who created for the King of France outside Paris the Chateau de Madrid; and when he died, as I have noted, the secret of the glaze appears to have been lost.

The great sculptor and architect, Michelozzo Michelozzi, we have seen to have been working with Luca within San Miniato and with Donato at Prato Cathedral. He belongs

[1] "These medals," says Milanesi, in his note on this passage, "had shewn the profile portrait of Savonarola, and on the reverse a city with towers (probably Florence) and an arm holding a dagger, pointing down with around it the words *Gladius Domini sup. teram cito et velociter.*" I have seen this fine medal recently at Florence.

to the group of great Florentine craftsmen who at this time came under Cosimo's patronage; and Vasari tells us that, after Brunelleschi, he was considered the most finished architect of his time. Devoted to his patron, Cosimo—who had preferred his design for the Medici Palace in the Via Larga even to that of Brunelleschi, as being simpler and less grandiose—when "in the year 1433" (Vasari) "Cosimo was sent into exile, Michelozzo, who loved him infinitely, and was most faithful to him, spontaneously accompanied him to Venice, and willed to remain with him as long as he stayed there." For Cosimo he designed at this time at Venice the Library of the Monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore; while his work at Prato, where he had been employed with Donatello on the pulpit of her Cathedral, was kept waiting for him until Cosimo de' Medici, in the year 1434, being recalled to his country, returned almost in triumph, bringing Michelozzo with him.

As well as in Prato, Michelozzo had worked with Donatello on the monument of Pope John XXIII, in the Baptistery of Florence, on the figure of *Jeremiah* for her Campanile on the font of the Siena Baptistery, and the monument to Bartolomeo Aragazzi, Secretary to Pope Martin V, at Montepulciano.[1] In finished sculptor's work may be noted his silver statuette of *S. John the Baptist* of the Florentine Baptistery, now preserved in the Opera del Duomo, and I hear of a terra-cotta statue of the same Saint by his hand in the cloisters of the SS. Annunziata of Florence; while in 1436 he parted company from Dona-

[1] The contract for the Prato pulpit—as Venturi points out—was made out by the Pratesi in 1433 with "*Donato et aliis.*" Not being able—or not wishing—to name the fugitive the name of Michelozzo was thus hidden, while other assistants, such as Pagno di Lapo and Maso di Bartolomeo, were included. Since writing this I have been able to see the magnificent terra-cotta *Baptist*, now under restoration.

tello to join Lorenzo Ghiberti in his work of the third door of the Baptistery, and ten years later, on Brunelleschi's death, was named Master of the Fabbrica del Duomo, a post which he held until 1450.

All the group whom we have just treated, Ghiberti, Brunelleschi, Donatello, Luca della Robbia and Michelozzo himself, are very appropriately classed by Dr. Venturi as sculptor-architects; and with them he joins Pagno di Lapo Portigiani, who had been *garzone* (assistant in the *bottega*) to Donatello and Michelozzo, and who had worked with them at Prato Cathedral and with Michelozzo in the beautiful Tabernacle of the Annunziata: while another valuable assistant was Maso Bartolomeo, called Masaccio, who worked together with Michelozzo and Donatello on the bronze doors of the Sacristy of Florence Cathedral, as well as at San Miniato for the Chapel of the Crucifix, casting there his great candelabra commissioned by Piero di Cosimo, and working on the finely decorative eagles of that Chapel.

But Michelozzo's fame, like that of Brunelleschi, stands firmly on his life work as an architect. After his return with Cosimo from the period of exile in Venice he was always under the direct patronage of the Medici. When the Convent of San Marco was rebuilt by Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici it was from his design (1437) that the church and famous library (mentioned by Sansovino as well as Vasari)—"eighty cubits long and eighteen wide, with sixty-four benches of cypress wood, full of the most beautiful books"—were constructed. This done he next completed the dormitory, the cloisters and "all the fine rooms of that Convent, which is considered as the best arranged, the most beautiful and convenient in Italy, thanks to the talent and industry of Michelozzo, who had

it all finished in 1452. They say that in this building Cosimo had spent thirty-six thousand ducats."

Michelozzo had designed, as I have mentioned, for the same patron that noble Medici Palace of the Via Larga ; and it was to him that Cosimo turned to design the beautiful villas which he was then making for himself outside the city. First of all Careggi, with its graceful loggia supported on Ionic columns, the architect adapting here very cleverly his construction to the already existing building, and arranging the water supply and the fountain which still survives. Then for Giovanni, son of Cosimo, he made at Fiesole another magnificent and noble palace ; while in the beautiful Villa of Cafaggiolo he had the whole arranging of the building itself, with its fine embattled towers, and its gardens, woods and fountains. Both these Villas—as we shall find later—were beloved by Cosimo's grandson Lorenzo, who breathed his last in this villa at Careggi. When his patron, Cosimo, had passed away Michelozzo remained under the patronage of his son Piero de' Medici, for whom he was working—as I have already mentioned—in the Chapel of the Crucifix of San Miniato, where his beautiful relief of a falcon is the *impresa* or device of Piero de' Medici ; and later he designed the richly ornate tabernacle of the Church of the Annunziata, which was carried out by his assistant, Pagno di Lapo Portigiani, and where, says Venturi, " the triumphant shrine, a temple within a temple, unites the forms of Brunelleschi with the ornamental richness of Donatello." The frieze here is especially sumptuous, with its festoons of fruit and flowers attached to roundels with the heads of Mithras ; and in the ceiling the Medici arms are introduced. Michelozzo designed a similar shrine, in collaboration with Luca della Robbia, for the Collegiate church of Impruneta. Called

FALCON: EMBLEM OF PIERO DE MEDICI

By Michelozzo Michelozzi — *Chapel of the [illegible]*

to Milan, where Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, had given to his friend Cosimo de' Medici a most beautiful palace, Michelozzo designed and decorated this. The gateway of the Medicean Bank at Milan, which has been preserved, shows his design, though the details of the sculpture suggest the vivacity and charm of such a Milanese sculptor as Omedeo ; while from Michelozzo's design is the beautiful Portinari chapel in the Church of Sant' Eustorgio in Milan, with its frieze of circling angels.

The influence of Florentine design was at this time—as we have seen with Donatello—spreading through Northern Italy ; and Michelozzo was even called to Dalmatia, where he designed at Ragusa the fine portico of the Palazzo dei Rettori. Returning to Florence he carried out the decoration of the ceiling in the Great Hall of the Two Hundred within the Palazzo della Signoria, where he repeats the richness and sumptuous character of the decoration of the Medici Palace in Via Larga, introducing the Lily of Florence with admirable effect into the square panelling. From the slender graceful forms of Brunelleschi, the Roman amplitude of Alberti, the emotional decorative sculpture of Donatello, Michelozzo, as Venturi has remarked, developed his own style, "composed of nobility of line, of balance and solidity of masses, of richness and of splendour." A great and representative architect, in his busy life he developed that style in sympathy with the culture of his age ; and carried the architecture of Florence into Northern Italy, just as her merchants, scholars and painters were, consciously or unconsciously, spreading her new message throughout the world.

CHAPTER V

COSIMO PATER PATRIÆ

COSIMO DE' MEDICI had, as we have seen, returned from exile in 1434. From this date, until his death in 1464, he practically controlled the destinies of Florence ; but his career, though successful, was by no means untroubled, and the first cloud on the political horizon came from Milan, where Rinaldo degli Albizzi had taken refuge with Duke Filippo Maria. In the meantime, however, in the year 1436, upon the Feast of the Annunciation, a great national religious event was celebrated within Florence. This was no less than the consecration of her reconstructed Cathedral of Santa Reparata under its new name of Santa Maria del Fiore, which had now—as we have lately seen (Chap. III)—received its crown of completion in Brunelleschi's marvellous cupola. This Feast of the Annunciation of 1436 was a memorable day in the annals of Florence. Pope Eugenius IV had come himself to consecrate the new Cathedral, and a raised passage, or *corridore*, had been made from Santa Maria Novella to Santa Maria del Fiore, covered with rich draperies and tapestries, along which the Pontiff advanced, followed by seven cardinals, thirty-seven archbishops and bishops, the ambassadors and envoys of foreign States and the members of the Signory. From the altar steps he gave his benediction to the new edifice ; and it was Cardinal Orsini who

sprinkled its walls with holy water, and a Davanzati of the time—whose name has come down to us in the palace in the Via Porta Rossa—who bore the Pope's train on the return from the ceremony, which had lasted five hours. The great day finished appropriately with a banquet: but Pope Eugenius was destined to return to Florence for a yet greater function only three years later.

At the conclusion of the same year the war with Milan actually broke out—a war of Condottieri, with Sforza leading the Florentine forces and Piccinino those of Milan. In this fifteenth century the five great powers of Italy had now definitely established themselves, and were in constant inter-relation and almost as frequent conflict. They were the two Republics of Florence and Venice, the Duchy of Milan, the States of the Church, and the Kingdom of Naples under the House of Aragon. Two circumstances which at this time led inevitably to unsettled conditions and intermittent war in North Italy were the tortuous state-craft of Duke Filippo Maria of Milan, and the ambitious policy of Venice, who, under the leadership of Doge Foscari, was now turning her thoughts to territorial expansion on the mainland. Duke Filippo Maria had inherited the ambition of his father, Gian Galeazzo, without his exceptional mentality. This last of the Visconti tyrants, says Symonds, was "so sensitive about his ill-formed person that he scarcely dared to show himself abroad. He habitually lived in secret chambers, changed frequently from room to room, and when he issued from his palace refused salutations in the streets. . . . At the same time he inherited much of his father's insight into character, and his power of controlling men more bold and active than himself. But he lacked the keen decision and broad views of Gian Galeazzo. He vacillated in policy, and kept planning plots which

seemed to have no object but his own disadvantage. Excess of caution made him surround the captains of his troops with spies, and check them at the moment when he feared they might become too powerful."

His treatment of Francesco Sforza may serve as an example of this fateful want of confidence in his own instruments. He had selected this brilliant Condottiere as his leader against the Venetians in 1431; but he could not keep him, and Cosimo, looking for a general against Milan, found the Sforza ready to his hand. Indeed, the whole story of this Duke's relations with Francesco Sforza who, whatever his faults of character, was certainly one of the most brilliant generals in this age of Condottieri, is a remarkable example of the results of his constant suspicion. "He seemed no less alarmed," says Sismondi, of this ruler of Milan, "at the success of his own generals than at that of his enemies; he was always the first to stop their progress, and to prevent them profiting by their success; so that his tortuous conduct daily produced some thwarting and unexpected results." Having let Sforza, who was his own general, slip out of his hands into the pay of Florence, Filippo Maria found himself, in 1441, obliged to make what has been termed a "ruinous peace" with the Republics of Florence and Venice, and then sought to attract Francesco Sforza permanently to his interest by giving to him his daughter, Bianca, in marriage, with the lordships of Cremona and Pontremoli. But no sooner had he done this than he began again, by the most complicated and subterranean plots, to seek to deprive his own son-in-law of all his lordships; so that when war broke out again between Milan and the Republics, Sforza was once more his opponent, and Filippo Maria, hard pressed by the Venetians, had to offer his son-in-law another and more sincere

reconciliation, which was, however, frustrated by the Duke of Milan's sudden death in the same year.

At the same time the growing power of Venice, with her immense wealth and trade, her sea power and strong dominant position in the Mediterranean, was a menace to the other States of Italy. She had secured Padua and Verona, had stretched south to take Ravenna, and from the Milanese had acquired Brescia in the territory of Bergamo; if she could possess herself of the whole Milanese State (which was then by no means impossible), and with it secure Genoa, her ancient rival and enemy, she would have become the dominant power of North Italy, and have threatened the very existence of Florence.

The traditional policy of Florence had been one of hostility to Milan, which, as we have seen (Chap. I) under Gian Galeazzo Visconti, had almost become master of the whole of Italy. But now with Cosimo this attitude changed, and, seeking to preserve what may be called the balance of power of the five Greater States, he inclines to a closer alliance with Milan; and in this policy is consistent through his career and is followed by his son Piero and his grandson Lorenzo. At the same time, in his foreign policy Cosimo shows but little sympathy with Republican freedom. Seeking to impose the power of his house upon Florence, he was inclined to favour similar conditions outside; and when at Bologna the house of the Bentivogli came to an end through the assassination of Annibale Bentivoglio in 1445, he managed to bring forward an illegitimate descendant of that house, and to place him at the head of the Bolognese State; while his support of Francesco Sforza against the Republic of Milan (Chap. I) has already come under our attention. The spirit of freedom survived at this time in North Italy,

but where its forms still existed, as in Siena and Genoa, resulted in anarchy or ruinous party struggles ; or again, as in Milan under the Sforza and Rome under Pope Nicholas V, in abortive efforts for liberty which were mercilessly stifled ; or lastly, where as in Venice and Florence preserving the name and traditions of the Republic, in the virtual rule of one family or of a close aristocracy.

In the meantime a cloud was threatening from the East, which many of these Italian rulers, absorbed in their schemes of conquest or personal ambition, did not treat with the full attention it deserved. The Greek Empire, which for centuries had maintained itself in a state of almost suspended animation or slow decay, was now hard pressed by the Turk—the last, but perhaps the most powerful, wave of Mohammedan invasion, which then threatened to engulf Christendom. Italy was exposed—as the next generation was to find out—to this same danger, though less directly ; but it was already becoming apparent in the East that Constantinople must fall unless help came from Western Europe. There had always been the division of past ages between the Churches of the East and West ; but the Eastern emperor of this time, John Palæologus, seeing this present menace to Byzantium, decided to come personally to Italy and there endeavour to heal the schism of the Churches, so that Christendom would present one undivided front to the barbarian invader. Bâle, Avignon had been offered for this Council of the Churches ; then Ferrara was suggested by Pope Eugenius IV. As early as July of 1436 Cosimo had the idea of bringing the Council to Florence. He had offered money assistance, and through the Signory the choice of residence for the Byzantium visitors (" twenty-five houses, *absque ulla mercedis pensione* "),

and two armed galleys to bring or escort them from Byzantium to Italy. When Ferrara was finally selected for the Council, which opened in 1438, his own disappointment was probably shared by all in Florence.

An accident, though a misfortune in itself, came to help the situation. The plague broke out in Ferrara. Everyone who could escaped from the city, and on the 27th of January, 1439, Pope Eugenius returned to his old quarters in S. Maria Novella of Florence; while a few days later a Byzantium noble, John Dissipato, had come to the city to inspect the quarters destined for the Greeks, to whom with their Emperor were offered the palaces of the exiled Peruzzi. Then came the ceremonial entry, on February 16th, of the Emperor himself, preceded by that of the Patriarch four days earlier. Cosimo, who had been made Gonfaloniere of Justice for this great occasion, went on foot to meet him as far as the gates of the city, accompanied by the Signory. It fell to the Chancellor of the Republic, the great scholar, Leonardo Bruni (Chap II), to conduct the Cæsar to his apartments, with the accompaniment of music and an immense crowd, which, however, a sudden and violent storm sent flying for shelter.

The Council opened the same month in S. Maria Novella, but nothing much was really done in the matter of the union of the Churches before April. Even then it needed all the eloquence and diplomacy of Cardinal Bessarion, Archbishop of Nicea, to keep his meeting—especially the Greek Fathers—together, and to get a settlement within prospect. On July 6th, within S. Maria del Fiore, beneath that spacious dome of Brunelleschi, took place the closing scene of this memorable Council of Florence. The Pope presided over five hundred Fathers, both Latin and Greek. It fell to Cardinal Cesarini to read

in Latin the decree of union, and to Cardinal Bessarion to repeat it in Greek. Then they embraced, as a sign of reunion ; and after this all present, the Greek as well as the Latin Fathers, came forward in order to kneel before the Pope. The union was completed, the schism of long ages healed ; and an inscription, as a record of this great event, was graven in marble beside the Sacristy of the Cathedral. But, as Roscoe has remarked, " little advantage was derived by either of the parties to this remarkable transaction." The Greek ecclesiastics stubbornly refused to obey the decree, which implied the supremacy of the Roman Church. Many of them, who had actually signed in Florence, publicly retracted their acceptance in Constantinople, where public feeling showed itself most hostile to the settlement ; and fourteen years later the terrible fall of Constantinople before the Ottoman Turk finished the Eastern Empire, and took away for ever one of the main objects for its execution.

What the Council had really achieved in history was in fact something quite different from what it proposed. It had brought the Greek mind into fertilizing contact with the West ; it had induced such scholars as Bessarion, or as the Platonist Gemistos Plethon, not only to visit, but to remain in Florence. It stimulated the whole movement of the New Learning (which I have described in Chap. II), and in this way had conferred a lasting benefit on Western civilization. Thus, even though its political and theological results were not all which had been hoped for and expected, we can understand that Cosimo himself had every reason to be satisfied with the result of his efforts in bringing to his own city this Council ; which both reflected credit on himself and increased his prestige, and at the same time gave results of real cultural value in the revival of Platonic philosophy, which was very

dear to his own intellectual sympathies. As Symonds has remarked, " the feelings with which the Florentines regarded their Greek guests were strangely mingled. While honouring them as the last scions of the noblest nation of the past, as the authentic teachers of Hellenic learning and the masters of the Attic tongue, they despised their empty vanity, their facile apostasy, their trivial pedantry, their personal absurdities. The long beards, trailing mantles, painted eyebrows and fantastic head-gear of the Byzantine sophists moved the laughter of the common folk, accustomed to the grave and simple '*lucco*' of their own burghers." Much of the erudition, too, of these visitors may have been later found to resolve itself into the knowledge of the " emasculated Greek which formed their mother tongue." But this was by no means the case with some of the scholars then attracted to the city of Arno ; not certainly with that fascinating figure who is known to us as Gemistos Plethon.[1]

Gemistos Plethon had been born (1355) towards the middle of the preceding century of a noble Byzantine family, and lived until exactly the middle of the century we are now treating. He had studied philosophy at Brusa ; had settled at Mistra in the Peloponesus, upon the old site of Sparta, where he exercised the functions of a judge—an appointment given him from Byzantium ; and he had also there professed philosophy. His official position made him acquainted with the decadence of the Greek race, even upon its ancient soil with the traditions of its past glories. He had probably seen a good deal of the Greek church of the time, and the picture which he draws, says Symonds, of the anarchy and immorality of

[1] Gemistos added his second name of Plethon when in Florence ; a name which at least suggested, indirectly, his intellectual descent from Plato.

the Peninsula is frightful.[1] At the same time his philosophical speculations had inspired him with the idea of reforming Hellas, by the revival of her ancient philosophy.

To do so he went back to the Platonic philosophy, as presented in its later form among the neo-Platonists of Alexandria. In his "Laws" (*Nomoi*)—the great work which seems to have comprised a metaphysical system, the outlines of a new religion, an elaborate psychology, a theory of ethics and a scheme of political administration—he goes back, as the cause of all, the absolute and eternal Reality, to the one Supreme God, whom he names as Zeus—existing as pure Being, manifesting himself as Will, Activity and Power. But from this source of pure Being are derived or begotten divine elements, to whom he gives the name of gods of the second degree, Poseidon in the intellectual universe, Hera the female element, created next to Zeus, then the lesser deities, Apollo, Artemis, Hephæstus, Dionysus, Athena—while Aphroditć (surely here the *pandemos*, not the heavenly goddess) is form and matter, but subject to its dissolution. Here we seem to find again the Platonic ideas, descending from pure Being to the lower manifestations or shadow forms, through the Titans, Jove's spurious offspring, through Pan and Demeter, the planets and dæmons, down to man himself, to the animal creation, even to inorganic matter; and his followers hailed Gemistos as "the mystagogue of celestial dogmas," in whom the

[1] The admirable sketch given by Symonds ("Revival of Learning," Chapter IV), of the life and doctrines of this extraordinary figure in the history of philosophy is, as stated by him, largely based on Schultze's "Geschichte der Philosophie der Renaissance." Roscoe makes Plethon the "preceptor of Chrysoloras, the great promoter of Greek philosophy in Italy."

soul of Plato was reincarnated—the Master whose new creed would include or supplant all existing religions. Even Cardinal Bessarion had come under his influence, and was ready (with the added attraction of a Cardinal's hat) to sacrifice the points at issue between the Greek and Latin churches in the hope of obtaining a wider ultimate religious union. There can be no doubt that these doctrines, put before the audience of the Florentine "Studio" by this inspiring and inspired Hellenic figure, this "eloquent, grave and beautiful old man"—at a time when Greek philosophy and letters were in the air of Florence, and Plato's name opened up new vistas of thought—had carried away his hearers, and captivated even the very practical mind of Cosimo de' Medici.

Cosimo was certainly strongly influenced by his intercourse at this time with Gemistos, and this interest in Platonic teaching, as we shall find, lasted throughout his life; but he sought for a practical issue to this new teaching, and found it in the idea of forming a Platonic Academy at Florence. For this purpose he had the young Marsilio Ficino, the son of his own physician, especially trained to the task of translating and explaining the writings of Plato; and his choice here was in every way justified by the result. This Platonic Academy will come again before us under Cosimo's grandson, Lorenzo de' Medici; and, therefore, I shall not speak of it further here, beyond thus recalling its initiation by Cosimo under the influence of Gemistos, of whom it has been well said that "Platonic studies in Italy never recovered from the impress of neo-Platonic mysticism which proceeded from his mind." At this time Plethon had published in Florence his treaties on the differences between Plato and Aristotle, raising thereby a controversy which raged furiously throughout

Italy, and long survived its author.[1] He himself had eventually returned to his magistracy at Mistra: his old age was harassed by the attacks of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Gennadios, who had scented not merely unorthodoxy but Paganism in his great work of the "Laws."

Not even on the death of Plethon (in 1450 at Mistra) did the Patriarch cease his war upon his opinions; but when five years later the despot of Rimini, Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, came to Greece he exhumed the philosopher's bones, and reburied them in a sarcophagus without the Church of San Francesco at Rimini—designed for him by the genius of Leo Battista Alberti, and dedicated to the memory of his mistress, the fair Isotta—adding the inscription . . . "these remains of Gemistos Plethon, chief of the sages of his day, Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta . . . induced by the mighty love with which he burns for men of learning brought hither and placed within this chest."

It was in 1444 that Cosimo de' Medici had founded the Medicean Library, which was open to all scholars, and on whose model the Vatican Library was founded soon afterwards by Nicholas V. This Medici Library, added to by his successors and located later within San Lorenzo, formed the nucleus of the famous Laurentian Library, which, as has been well suggested, might be more justly called the Medicean Library, as some acknowledgment of the debt we owe to its creators. We must remember that, even apart from this library,

[1] In 1458 Georgios Trapezuntios, upholding Aristotle, had attacked Plato's character, and put Mahomet before him as a legislator. Bessarion replied by his oration "in calumniatorem Platonis." Theodoros Gaza then criticized Gemistos, and Bessarion replied; and so the battle—in which the position of scholastic philosophy was involved—continued. Cardinal Bessarion, who had nearly become Pope, was a generous patron of letters, and gave his library to the Republic of Venice.

Cosimo, during his exile in Venice (from October, 1433, to the same month in 1434), had built the Library of San Giorgio Maggiore; and had, besides this and his own collection, created the Libraries of San Marco and of his favourite foundation of the Abbey of Fiesole. When the great Humanist, Niccolo de' Niccoli, died, Cosimo had acquired that scholar's precious collection of manuscripts, four hundred of which he presented to San Marco with the inscription, "*ex hereditate doctissimi viri Nicolai*," and kept the rest for his own Medicean Library, or for his friends.

The greatest treasure of this Medicean or Laurentian Library, which has been stated to have held as many as ten thousand manuscripts of the classic authors, was the original copy of the "Pandects" of the Emperor Justinian, said to have been found by the Pisans at Amalfi, when their fleet captured that city in 1137, and to be the first authentic copy from which all others were taken. Pope Leo X carried off this work to Rome in 1561, but it was returned to Florence three centuries later, though one of the Austrian archdukes seems to have stripped it of its rich binding. The Medici Library contained also in manuscript Cicero's "Letters," the "Annals" of Tacitus (the sole existing copy of the first five books), the "Tragedies" of Sophocles and Æschylus and Cæsar's "Commentaries"; and a very ancient text of the Bible, the "Codex Amiatinus," which had been copied (690–716) by Ceolfrid, Abbot of Wearmouth.

In 1440 Cosimo and his family had moved into their palace, which I have described (Chap. IV), in the Via Larga, and the same year the war with Milan came to an end. The Milanese troops under Piccinino, who had been threatening Florence, when retiring into the Casentino were there defeated by the Florentines, under

the leadership of Neri Capponi, in the battle of Anghiari; and the territory of Casentino came to Florence, while Venice obtained Bergamo from the Milanese. An incident which occurred in the year following connects itself with these military operations; and deserves our own closer attention, since it has left (rightly or wrongly) a stain on the memory of Cosimo's leadership in Florence.

The intimate friend and most trusted officer of the victor of Anghiari, Neri Capponi, was Balduccio d'Anghiari, a courageous and distinguished soldier of fortune, who had at that time, when commanding the Florentine infantry, criticized very severely the conduct of another Florentine citizen, Orlandini—through whose negligence or apparent cowardice the road to the city had been left open to the enemy, who had occupied the heights of Fiesole, and threatened the safety of Florence. In 1441 this Orlandini had become Gonfaloniere, and as such had sent a friendly message to Balduccio, inviting the latter to visit him in the Palace of the Signory to discuss certain military matters. Balduccio had been received by the Gonfaloniere with every sign of friendship, and conducted to his own room, where he was suddenly attacked by concealed assassins, murdered, and his body thrown from the windows of the Palace into the Piazza. The decapitated body was later exposed in the Piazza as that of a traitor to the Republic; the matter made a terrible impression at Florence, but the mystery of this political murder was never really cleared up. Machiavelli considered it as a private vendetta on the part of Orlandini, who had every reason of revenge against Balduccio for the latter's comments on his own conduct; while elsewhere it has been considered "as indicative of the long arm of Cosimo," conveying to Neri Capponi, through the fate of his lieutenant, a

terrible warning that his own services and successes should not tempt him to venture too far—this view being born out by a contemporary writer, Giovanni Cavalcanti, who was, however, no friend of the Medici.

On the other hand it has been pointed out that Cosimo's position at the head of the State was, at this time (1441), by no means so secure as it was later, and that his intervention in the matter to press for inquiry might have been resented by the Signory; and much more effectively, in my judgment, that such a deed of blood seems quite contrary to the whole tenor of his character and methods in state-craft. If violence and assassination were features of his programme they would almost certainly have reappeared at some other time later. On the contrary, we find throughout that he preferred milder and more subtle methods for securing his supremacy; and that exile or even taxation—more or less, in different cases—generally gave him the security or influence which he desired. In fact these Medici merchant princes ruled by money and financial power as much as—or more than—by force of arms. The acquisition in this same year (1441) by Cosimo for the Florentine Republic of the important city of Borgo San Sepolcro, in the uplands above Arezzo, from the Pope for the sum of twenty-five thousand florins—"whereby he increased the obligation of the State to him, as he had himself advanced the purchase money"—is an example of these methods in that very time; and again and again we shall find that the policy of these earlier Medici is directed against anyone who threatens their financial quite as much as their political supremacy, the reason being that these two were so intimately connected and inter-related.

During all these years Neri Capponi had remained

by Cosimo's side, and, as Sismondi points out, from the year 1434 to 1453, when Neri Capponi died, these two chiefs of the Republic had six times assembled the Parliament to make a *Balia;* and, "availing themselves of its authority, which was above the law, obtained the exile of all their enemies, and filled the balloting purses of the magistrates with the names of their own partisans." At the same time, during this period of twenty-one years, the Republic was free from party factions within, and pursued a successful policy without; art and commerce had flourished, and the people generally were satisfied, even if lucrative places within Florence and her subject cities went to the Medici and their friends, When Capponi died there was indeed an effort made to resume by lot free elections of the Signory. But the movement was not for long supported, even by those who seemed most to have desired it; and Luca Pitti, as Gonfaloniere, with Cosimo's support in the background, reassembled the *Balia*—having first filled the Piazza with his soldiers and armed peasants—which was more tyranical than even its predecessors, and sent to exile many citizens who were most attached to liberty.

This had been in 1458, and on August 1st of 1464, Cosimo, the greatest of the Medici, died in his villa of Careggi, leaving only his son, Piero, called "Il Gottoso"—who was such a martyr to gout that he could neither walk nor ride, but had to be carried in his litter—and his two grandsons, Lorenzo and Giuliano, who were still under age. Released from the control of his great fellow-citizen and leader, Luca Pitti, rich, ambitious and powerful, felt the door open to him to become Chief of the State; and the magnificent Palace, which he was even then constructing from Brunelleschi's

designs, shewed, almost too ostentatiously, the splendour of his ambition. But his fellow citizens deeply felt their loss in Cosimo—"*vir potens*," as has been said of him, "*famosus in toto mundo*" (a man of high power, famous through all the world),—and recognized his exceptional merits. In his last days his thoughts had gone back to the Platonic philosophy, which had been one of the inspirations of his life, and, speaking with Ficino of life's miseries and the imperfections of our nature, "as he continued his sentiments became more elevated, and far from bewailing the lot of humanity he began to exult in the prospect of that happier state to which he felt himself approaching." He was buried, as he himself had desired, without any pomp beneath the dome of San Lorenzo, to whose Prior he had made confession before taking for the last time the Sacrament. The Signory respected his wishes, and abandoned their programme of a great funeral and imposing monument; but the people insisted on some special honour being paid to his memory, and this was found in the title, bestowed on him by public decree and inscribed upon his tomb, with the words "COSIMUS MEDICES HIC SITUS EST DECRETO PUBLICO PATER PATRIÆ." It is by this title—greater surely than that of any king or emperor—of "Father of his Country" (*Pater Patriæ*) that his name has come down to later ages.

The first move of Piero de' Medici, who now took his father's place at the helm of the ship of State, seems to have been a distinctly misguided one; and I use the word misguided here because in this step he seems to have been guided, perhaps advisedly, to his own loss. Succeeding to the immense wealth of his father, as well as to his position as Chief of the Republic, and probably feeling that his health, which was not good, interfered

with his attention to this constant pressure of business affairs, he decided to withdraw a portion of his fortune from commerce, and invest it in land. Had he remained as a private individual the reasons for this decision might have been sufficient, or even admirable. But we have seen that part of Cosimo's policy, as a merchant prince who really controlled the State, had been to so combine the financial interests of Florence, as well as those of many citizens, with his own that they could with difficulty be disentangled, or exist apart. In fact this move on the part of Piero at once gave a dangerous shock to the commercial interests of the city. Every debtor of the Medici, who found his money now being called in, instead of a supporter became an actual or possible enemy to Piero, and the popularity of Casa Medici was seriously affected ; while at the same time without the city the death of Cosimo's firm ally and friend, Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, on March the 8th of 1466, weakened its position abroad.

For this situation in North Italy at once developed elements of danger. Galeazzo Sforza, who succeeded Duke Francesco, possessed neither his father's character nor ability ; a profligate and spendthrift, his vices and cruelty soon alienated the affection of his subjects, while the danger of French intervention, through the claims of the House of Orleans, already began to cast its shadow over Italy. Piero's eldest son, Lorenzo, who, though still young, had already shown signs of extraordinary ability, had been sent in this very year (1466) to Rome ; ostensibly to look after the commercial interests of the Medici in that city—where Giovanni Tornabuoni was then in charge of their Bank—but also most probably to get into personal touch with the Roman Curia, and to keep an eye on political develop-

ments. Piero's letter to him, while still in Rome, reflects his anxiety on the situation at Milan; and Lorenzo, it may be noted, had already been sent by his father in the year preceding (1465), as an envoy of the Signory, in the marriage arranged between Hippolita Sforza and Alfonzo of Calabria, where he had won golden opinions by his tact and that befitting sense of splendour which helped to give him later his title of The Magnificent.

But meanwhile within Florence a storm was brewing which soon threatened the safety, if not the existence, of Piero himself and his whole family. Luca Pitti had already come before us in the later years of Cosimo as one of the merchant princes of Florence, and as taking a leading part in the affairs of State. "He wished," says Perrens, "to be the rival of the Medici, and even to eclipse them. Less rich than themselves, he made more display with his wealth. He built two palaces, the one at Rusciano, a mile without the city, the other within the city walls, that famous Palazzo Pitti, which has still preserved his name—even after the Medici, as Grand Dukes, had come to live there." Luca offered an asylum from justice to every exile or criminal who came to work upon these walls, which rose out of the ground in Cyclopean stones, like the work of the old Etruscans; and every citizen who sought his favour knew it could be gained by some offering of precious wood or marble. Under Cosimo he had been content for a time to take a second place, but with Piero it was different; and it was soon noticed that the relations of the two men had become strained, while Luca's vanity and ambition saw himself already as head of the State, and he now set in motion the plot which was to give him this envied position. Although it may be doubted whether he was really popular with the people of Florence—whom his

arrogant methods and display of wealth may well have estranged—yet he easily found supporters among the Medici malcontents. One of Cosimo's most trusted friends had been that Diotisalvi Neroni, to whom Piero had owed the advice which had led him to call in the Medici debts, and who now allied himself with Pitti; while Niccolo Soderini seems to have been a sincere supporter of the old Republican Constitution, and, as such, opposed to Medici domination, and some personal grudge seems to have brought Agnolo Acciaiuoli—who had held firm to Cosimo throughout, even through the days of his exile—into the plot, which was now coming to a head.

The immediate issue came over the question of alliance with Galeazzo Sforza, and a loan of money which he desired. The Milanese alliance had never been popular in Florence, though it was a corner stone of the Medici policy, and as such supported by Piero; nor was the loan viewed with public favour. The two parties of the Medici and of Luca Pitti were now openly divided, and were fairly equal. Piero had sent his son, Lorenzo, to win the support of Ferrante, King of Naples, to the Milanese alliance. Lorenzo's diplomacy was, as so often, successful; he had just returned to Florence, and was with his father at their Villa at Careggi.

At this moment the Pitti conspirators decided on armed intervention. They had approached Colleoni, the great Venetian Condottiere, and had the promise of military support from Borso d'Este of Ferrara; in the city they would arm their own adherents, join the Ferrarese troops, and overwhelm the Medici. Piero de' Medici's death is stated to have been part of the programme; but at this moment it seems that Giovanni Bentivoglio of Bologna (whose family owed their position

to Cosimo's support) wrote to Piero, warning him of his imminent danger.

Piero had decided to place this letter before the Signory of Florence, and then to arm his own friends. With this object he arranged, on August 23rd of 1466, to be carried in his litter from Careggi to Florence. Lorenzo, as I have just mentioned, was then with him; and it would appear that he had started from Careggi early in the morning for Florence, while his father was to follow later. On the way he noticed a number of suspicious-looking persons, and heard inquiries as to his father's whereabouts, which gave him further alarm. It was, in fact, an armed party who were lying in wait to intercept Piero on his way to the city. Lorenzo, suspecting the purpose of these armed men, promptly dispatched one of his followers warning his father to take another and more circuitous road, while he himself took the direct road, and met the inquiries for his father with the reply that he was following at a short distance. His presence of mind (and there is every reason to accept this story, which is quite in keeping with his character of cool decision in face of danger) probably saved his father's life on this critical occasion.[1]

Arriving safely at his own palace in Via Larga, Piero at once collected his supporters, sent for the help of some Milanese troops who were then in Florence, and had soon a force at his disposal larger than his enemies could muster. Both parties stood facing each other in arms; and for the next twenty-four hours a conflict

[1] The story is given in detail by Roscoe, G. F. Young and E. L. S. Horsburgh; the latter, however, pointing out that Piero had already received a full disclosure of his enemy's plans from a notary named Niccolo Fedini, but adding that the story alone accounts for the hasty flight of the Archbishop, Neroni's brother, at whose villa on the road the armed band was to intercept Piero.

might have taken place within the city. Piero was blamed for employing Milanese troops; but had a fair reply in the support of his opponents by Borso d'Este. Here again Lorenzo's diplomacy probably helped the solution; and Luca Pitti is said to have been tempted by a proposal that Lorenzo should marry his daughter. A reconciliation was patched up, and the conspiracy melted away. In the September following Parliament, assembled in the Piazza, appointed a *Balia* who decreed that for ten years public offices should be filled by selection in place of lot. The Medici party was triumphant, and the offices of State remained at their disposal.

Piero de' Medici, in this his hour of triumph, showed a noble clemency and moderation. There was no bloodshed; though Diotisalvi Neroni was banished, and Niccolo Soderini had withdrawn to Venice, where he was joined by Acciaiuoli, and soon began, in the manner of *fuorusciti*, to stir up trouble against Florence. Luca Pitti was pardoned outright. He would probably have been imprisoned, had not Piero taken his part as one of his own relations; but this clemency was a final blow, and he never recovered his position or influence. There was no marriage between his daughter and Lorenzo, although the girl was allowed to wed Giovanni Tornabuoni; and Machiavelli, who does full justice to Piero's moderation, and to the fact that through his influence no blood was shed by his partisans, tells us that Luca Pitti's house, where previously crowds of citizens had assembled, presented now a vast solitude, while the superb edifices which he had begun were abandoned by the builders. From his high position in Florence Luca Pitti fell into general neglect and indifference among the citizens whom he had hoped to rule. "The remainder of his days," says Roscoe, "was passed in

obscurity and neglect, but the extensive mansion which his pride had planned" (and which, after being a Grand Ducal and Royal residence, has now become a noble home for the Arts) "still remains to give celebrity to his name."

Aiming at occupying the great position held already for two generations by the Medici merchant princes—a position which was still apparently open to any citizen of wealth and commanding position—Luca Pitti had neither their wise moderation, nor their intellectual supremacy. It has been said that Lorenzo, when discussing with a friend his father's line of conduct in declining any further severities, had observed that "he only knows how to conquer who knows how to forgive"; in any case, the saying is quite in keeping with his wide outlook on life, and the generous impulses of his character.

When we consider the disregard of human life and suffering, the frightful and barbarous cruelty which disfigures too frequently that age in Italy, in spite of its high degree of culture, and which we shall find in the highest places of the Church as well as among the despots of Italy and their followers; when we find, too, that those who had failed here in their attempt, when permitted to escape, only recommenced their plots, we cannot admire sufficiently the magnanimity and wise toleration shown on this occasion by Piero and by his eldest son, Lorenzo, whose name now enters more fully into our story.

CHAPTER VI

THE SPRINGTIME RETURNS

THOUGH the conspiracy, which had come to a head in this autumn of 1466, had been crushed in Florence, the trouble was by no means ended. We have seen in the preceding chapters that a corner-stone of the Medici foreign policy, from Cosimo onwards, had been the alliance with Milan, this alliance having been really—and very effectively—intended to check the ambitious designs of Venice of acquiring territory in Northern Italy. But this policy had very naturally annoyed the Government of the Most Serene Republic; and when the exiles betook themselves to Venice they found there a sympathetic reception. Acciaiuoli, who had withdrawn only to Siena, tried from thence to resume negotiations with Piero with a view to pardon, but obtained from him only a courteous but firm refusal: "though for my own part," he writes, "I heartily forgive you, yet the offence is one which the Republic cannot and ought not to pass over." Niccolo Soderini, now in Venice with the other exiles, actually had a monthly allowance from that State of one hundred ducats; but Venice would not openly support the exiles in their attack on Florence, although she permitted them to approach their famous general, Colleoni, and even gave her unofficial blessing to his enterprise.

We have seen that they had been in relations with this

military leader before the conspiracy had failed in Florence. What Colleoni wanted was, without doubt, to establish himself, as so many other Condottieri had done (the Sforza at Milan being the most successful example), as Prince of some smaller Italian State; and a war in Romagna offered him a good chance of securing this. Several of the smaller Italian princes now joined his standard, including Ercole d'Este, Lord of Ferrara, Alessandro Sforza of Pesaro and the Lords of Forli, Faenza and Mirandola. On the other hand, the Florentines were supported by Milan and Bologna—Galeazzo Sforza and Giovanni Bentivoglio commanding their troops in person—while the Neapolitan contingent was under the command of Alfonso, Duke of Calabria; and the whole force of Florence was under the supreme command of Federigo di Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, one of the greatest military leaders of his time in Italy.

It will be seen from the above that this war was to be a war of Condottieri; and such wars were often lengthy, expensive and indecisive. Why should the leaders force on a decisive engagement, when their own interest was clearly to be kept in the field and have their men employed? Colleoni had, indeed, advanced into Romagna, but matters in this war went very slowly. The Florentines began to complain of its heavy expenses, and found that the presence in their camp of the vain and foolish young Galeazzo was a hindrance to Montefeltro, himself a really experienced and capable commander. Duke Galeazzo received a diplomatic invitation to visit Florence, where he took up his residence in the Palace of the Medici, not very much to their satisfaction; and after he had gone Montefeltro obtained a success at Molinella, where

Colleoni seems to have been worsted.[1] But even after this the war resumed its indecisive character; and the troops on both sides now retired into winter quarters, apparently with the feeling that their war was going on very nicely.

At Florence the young Duke of Milan made upon her citizens a very bad impression. He took up his abode, say the Medici records, in our house at his own desire, though the Signory had prepared for him an apartment at S. Maria Novella. It is said that he rode through the city with an empty purse opened at his belt (we have seen that he had before this been trying to raise a loan) as a hint of his requirements; and his arrogance, profligacy and ostentation scandalized the decent burghers. Scarcely less unwelcome was the Neapolitan leader, Alfonzo of Calabria, who was also frequently in the city and expected to be magnificently entertained; and neither of these princely leaders seem to have seen much of the enemy in this campaign. The intervention of the French king, Louis XI, must, under these conditions, have been more than welcome to Florence, whose traditional policy had always been that of friendship with France, the Medici themselves having a few years earlier had permission to introduce the lilies of France into their Coat of Arms; and eventually, with the assistance of the Venetian Pope, Paul II, terms of peace were arranged. These terms were really a triumph for the Medici. The exiles were ignored in the provisions of the treaty; and if Florence had a

[1] Machiavelli said of this battle, which continued from noon until evening, that not a soldier had lost his life, but a few horses only were killed and some prisoners taken; other writers describe it, however, as a more serious engagement with losses on both sides. The whole campaign seems in any case a typical example of war under the Condottieri system, which was most fatal to the non-combatants.

heavy bill to pay for war expenses, she had also something to the good, for she now acquired the town of Sarzana and the fortress of Sarzanello as well as Castel Nuovo, which strengthened her northern frontier along the coast road.

Peace had now come at home and abroad. The Medici were more firmly established than ever; and the last years of Piero's life were given to festivities, taking the form of magnificent tournaments or *giostre*, and also to the celebrations of the betrothal and marriage of Lorenzo de' Medici with Clarice Orsini, of the great Roman house of that name—the bride who seems to have been selected for him by his mother, Lucrezia. At this time Lorenzo was about nineteen years of age, his brother Giuliano being fifteen; and, though still young, he had had the advantage of working under and with his father in State matters. Piero de' Medici, in his own marriage had made an alliance with one of the great Florentine merchant families—his wife, Lucrezia, a woman of character and high intellectual attainments, having been a Tornabuoni; and it is in some ways to be regretted that Lorenzo, who in this matter had evidently followed his parents' wishes, had not done the same, instead of seeking an alliance (probably prompted by social considerations) with the great princely house of Rome.

The *Giostre* (for there seems to have been two of these) were very brilliant pageants, and have been celebrated by two poets of the time in verses which have lived. These poems are the "Giostra di Lorenzo de' Medici," by Luigi Pulci, and the "Giostra del Magnifico Giuliano di Piero de' Medici," by Messer Angelo Poliziano, an old copy of which now lies before me. Roscoe remarks that it is doubtful at what particular time these celebrations took place, and whether the two brothers signalized themselves

on the same or different occasions ; but with the evidence of Pulci's poem [1] he is able to date that of Lorenzo as taking place on the 7th of February, 1468, when the subject of these verses was in his twentieth year ; and their immediate occasion seems to have been the marriage in Florence of Braccio Martello, an intimate friend of his own. Giuliano de' Medici would have been then in his fifteenth year, when he appears among the combatants on a steel-clad charger (*tutto d'acciajo coperto*), and gained a prize ; and his own *Giostra*, celebrated by Poliziano, must have been at no long interval of time and before Lorenzo's marriage, that is to say, in the space of time between the 7th of February, 1468 and December of the same year. Here—though he is the hero of the story in these *stanze*—the poem is actually addressed to Lorenzo, under whose protection Florence then dwelt in peace,

> " E tu, ben nato Laur, sotto il cui velo
> Fiorenza lieta in pace si riposa."

and one of the most beautiful episodes depicted in these *stanze*, which take us far away from the actual *Giostra*, is is that of the birth of sea-born Aphrodite—

> " Una donzella non con uman volto,
> Da'zefiri lascivi spinta a proda ;
> Gir sopra un nicchio. . . ."

a description which Sandro Botticelli has closely followed in his famous painting of this subject.

If this beautiful poem, to which I shall return in a later

[1] " L'anno correva mille quattro-cento
Et sessant'octo dall'incarnazione,
Et ordinossi per mezzo Gennaio,
Ma il septimo di fessi di Febraio."
" Giostra di Lorenzo."

chapter, was actually written by Poliziano at this time, when he would have been about fourteen years of age,[1] it is a remarkable instance of precocious genius ; and it is to be noticed that this very time saw the awakening in Lorenzo himself of the poetic faculty, which he too possessed in a very remarkable degree. This may have been more immediately due to the inspiration of the beautiful Lucrezia Donati, whose charms of mind and person form the subject of his earliest poem, and from whom at the tourney he is stated to have received an approving smile and a wreath of violets. But it seems evident that these verses of the "Commentario"—to which I shall return later—are as much the dream of the youthful poet as a passion which entered deeply into his life. At these tourneys the young members of the great Florentine families of princely merchants appeared as knights, each accompanied by his standard-bearer with trumpeters, men-at-arms, pages and all the imposing accompaniment of this mimic warfare. They rode round the Piazza [2] in splendid costumes, before they donned their armour and reappeared for the actual tilting. We get an idea of their rich costume in Benozzo's procession of the Magi, where it will be remembered that both the Medici princes appear ; and Lorenzo's own costume here has been described as having been a velvet-embroidered surcoat, with cape of white silk edged with red, and scarf of white embroidered with roses and pearls, while his steed was covered (we see these elaborate trappings in that of

[1] "*Il Poliziano poteva avere allora poco piu di 14 anni quando scrisse le Stanze*,"—introduction to the *Stanze* of Messer Angelo Poliziano.

[2] The Piazza was that of Santa Croce, where Lorenzo himself tells us that he had prepared a tournament with great splendour and expense ; and that the first prize had been awarded to himself, "namely a helmet inlaid with silver and surmounted with a figure of Mars."

Gozzoli's fresco) in red and white velvet, also adorned with pearls. His device here was a bay tree, one part faded and dead, the other blossoming with green, with the motto "*Le temps revient*": for indeed this was springtime come back to Florence, and these two young princes seem to symbolize its advent.

The actual marriage of Lorenzo with Clarice Orsini, which was celebrated on June 4th of 1469 in the Medici church of San Lorenzo, was another occasion for entertainment, in which Piero and Lucrezia de' Medici opened their doors to Florence. There were five great banquets given, in which "the loggias and gardens of the Palace in Via Larga were filled to overflowing, separate tables being set out for the young ladies who were the bride's companions, and the older ladies forming Madonna Lucrezia's company"; and the feasting, which began on Sunday morning, lasted until the Tuesday following. It was probably a political marriage, arranged for both parties by their parents, Madonna Lucrezia having evidently a large share in the choice of a suitable bride. Lorenzo's own account in his "Ricordi"—"I took Donna Clarice, daughter of Jacopo Orsini to wife, or rather, she was given to me, in December, 1468, and the marriage was celebrated in our house on the 4th of June of 1469"—does not sound passionately enthusiastic, though obviously a memorized record of the actual dates of the marriage celebration.

Very shortly after his marriage he was sent to Milan by his father upon a political mission. A son had been born to Galeazzo Sforza and his wife Bona of Savoy, who was to be that hapless Giovanni Galeazzo, whose destiny was associated with misfortune to himself and his country; and Piero, being invited to stand as sponsor to the infant, through ill-health

was compelled to send his eldest son to fill his place. Lorenzo, therefore, left Florence early in July, passing through Lucca, Pietra Santa, Sarzana, and at the two first-named places had a spontaneous and enthusiastic reception from the citizens. From Sarzana he went by Pontremoli to Milan, where a letter to his wife on July 24th tells her that " I am arrived here safely, and am in good health. This, I believe, will please thee better than anything else, except my return : at least, so I judge from my own desire to be once more with thee. Associate as much as possible with my father and my sisters. I shall make all possible speed to return, for it seems a thousand years until I see thee." His gifts on this occasion were magnificent—a gold necklace to the Duchess, and a diamond valued at three thousand ducats —and led Duke Galeazzo to express the wish that he would stand sponsor to all his other children.

It was at this time, after Lorenzo's return to Florence, that a difficulty arose with Pope Paul II, who had endeavoured to seize Rimini on the death of Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta ; while the claim of that Prince's natural son, Roberto Malatesta, was successfully upheld by Florence, in alliance with Milan, Naples and the Duke of Urbino. But this matter, which is important especially as marking the beginning of less friendly relations between Rome and Florence under the Medici, belongs really to later history ; and the month of December of this year of 1469 saw the death of Piero de' Medici, whose health had been declining for the last months. " An upright man," said Lorenzo very truly, of his father, " of the most perfect kindness " ; and there can be little doubt that his loss was deeply felt by many of Piero's fellow-citizens, who recognized the fine qualities of his character. Piero must have been deeply attached to his brilliant

son, but sometimes perhaps a little jealous of his extraordinary abilities. "Tell him," he says, writing to his wife from Careggi in July of 1469, "to depart in no way from his instructions. I am quite determined that the goslings shall not lead the geese to the water." A little before his death he seems to have been much exercised in his mind over the arrogance and tyrannical methods adopted by some of his partisans; and so annoyed was he that he called certain of them to his bedside, and told them plainly that if they did not alter their methods he would recall some of their exiled opponents; and, in fact, he seems to have had a secret interview at his Villa of Caffagiolo with Agnolo Acciaiuoli, with a view to carrying out his threat. He was a good man—Machiavelli tells us—to whom violence as well as display were hateful. In State matters he took a special interest in foreign politics; but at home he fully continued the great Medici tradition, bequeathed to him by Giovanni and Cosimo, of noble endowments to the city in buildings, and an intelligent and generous patronage of letters and art.

We have seen this in studying the work of Michelozzo and Luca della Robbia in San Lorenzo and San Miniato, and shall see it later in Gozzoli's frescoes of the Medici Chapel; and that fascinating artist, Sandro Filipepi, called Botticelli, comes definitely at this period under Medici patronage. Sandro had, indeed, painted the whole family—with Cosimo, *Pater Patriæ*, kneeling before the Infant Christ, Piero himself also kneeling and occupying the centre of the picture, with Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici at the two sides, the former standing upright holding a sword, the latter kneeling clad in a robe of white and gold—in his *Adoration of the Magi*, which is now in the Uffizi Gallery, but is stated to have been painted

early in 1467 for Piero, to be placed in S. Maria Novella as a votive painting for his deliverance with his family from the conspiracy organized by Luca Pitti.[1] Piero, like his father, was buried in San Lorenzo ; and an urn of rich porphyry in the old Sacristy with the inscription "*Patri Patruoque*" was the monument offered by Lorenzo and Giuliano to the memory of their father and their uncle Giovanni. Nothing, we feel, could have been more simple and yet more dignified than this lasting memorial.

By Piero's death Lorenzo, still quite young, though with the valuable training and experience of the past few years already behind him, was left at the head of the State ; for he himself has recorded that on the second day after that loss—"when I, Lorenzo, was very young, to wit, twenty-one years of age, there came to our house the principal men of the city and State to express their grief and to comfort me. They requested that I would undertake the care of the city and State, as my father and grandfather had done." The reason here given for his acceptance of this great task, in spite of his youth and his sense of its responsibility and danger, seems to be a very sound one ; namely, that he owed it to his friends and supporters, and to his own security—"I undertook it solely for the preservation of my friends and supporters, since at Florence it is ill-living without State authority (*a Firenze si puo mal vivere senza lo Stato*)."

The general feeling of the citizens was evidently in favour of the continuance of the Medici leadership ; and

[1] This is the suggestion made by Colonel G. F. Young, and the internal evidence of the picture seems to bear out this view, though it does not seem to be accepted by Mr. Herbert Horne in his work on Botticelli. The artist himself appears in this *Adoration*, standing upright on the left, wrapped in a long mantle.

the meeting called together by Tomaso Soderini, Piero's brother-in-law, on the day of the latter's funeral, had only given expression to this wish by the deputation who came to visit Lorenzo in his own house. The Republic therefore continued, as before, in its traditional forms; but under Soderini's advice and guidance Lorenzo seems to have taken steps that he should be fully consulted, and that home and foreign policy should remain under his own control. A proposal, made in 1470, that the Electoral College should be limited to those only who had qualified since the year 1434, which would have limited that college to an electoral body of forty-five persons ("forty-five tyrants" they were called) raised strong public opposition, and was wisely withdrawn; but the *Balia* of 1471 really established the Medici domination, by arranging such scrutiny of the ballot boxes that only adherents of their party should be elected.

Lorenzo's ascendancy was thus secured; and, seeing that he had been invited to become head of the State, he can scarcely be blamed for thus making himself safe. A weak government would have invited such intrigues as he had already, within his own short experience, seen a good deal of. His family had, rightly or wrongly, reached such a position in the State that they must either remain at the front, or risk being exiled or destroyed; and we must bear in mind also that at this time in Italy the movement towards Communal freedom had become exhausted, and replaced by the authority of despots, who have been described (and this description applies directly to even the Medici) as the partisans of social order in distracted burghs, the heroes of the middle classes and the multitude.

The insurrection which occurred at this time in Prato

proves that the elements of disorder and revolt still existed, and only waited their opportunity. Bernardo Nardi, one of those who had been exiled by Piero de' Medici, and who had joined the standard of Colleoni and been declared rebel against the State, thought he saw that opportunity; and with some hundred of his followers succeeded, on April 6th of 1470, in surprising the gate of the township of Prato and making himself master of the Public Palace, arresting at the same time the Florentine Podestà. He seems to have hoped for support, through Diotisalvi Neroni, from Bologna and Ferrara; and to have thought that with Prato, as a Republican stronghold, in his hands he might rouse Tuscany, and even capture Florence. He now harangued the Signory of Prato, and traversed her streets, calling on the citizens to join him in the fight for liberty; but he met with a very cold reception from the public, and the Signory replied that they wished for no other liberty than that which they already enjoyed under Florence. Bernardo now bethought him of impressing the Pratesi with the evidence of his energy and power by hanging the Florentine governor from the windows of the Public Palace; but this magistrate, who will come before us later in the story of the Pazzi conspiracy, showed himself, here as then, a man of resource and cool courage, and represented to Bernardo that it would be better for himself if he kept him alive so as to give his orders to the people, while by killing him he would only bring upon himself certain vengeance.

Bernardo accepted the suggestion, and ordered this governor, Cesare Petrucci, to address the assembly in his favour; but in all this negotiation time was gained, the citizens rallied against Nardi, and before the force sent

from Florence could reach Prato the insurrection was already at an end. Bernardo was overpowered, made prisoner, and beheaded in Florence with six of his adherents, while twelve others were hanged in Prato ; and this abortive, though most daring, attempt probably strengthened Lorenzo's hand, by showing the necessity of a strong Government, if the elements of disaffection and disorder were to be kept under.

Lorenzo de' Medici has been charged in his later career with having sought to occupy the minds of his fellow-citizens with revelry and amusements, and so to have led them from their Republican severity into a more dissolute method of life. There is no evidence to lead us to believe that such was his programme ; but it was very natural that in these earlier days of his rule, with peace restored, and two young princes—himself and his brother, Giuliano—at the head of the State, an atmosphere of relaxation of gaiety and refined pleasure should have become general. The visit of his ally, Duke Galeazzo of Milan, who came with his Duchess, Bona of Savoy, in 1471, attended by an immense train, involved a good deal of entertainment. The Ducal visitors were lodged in the Palazzo Medici, and the procession which accompanied them was of unparalleled magnificence—including a body-guard of a hundred knights and five hundred men-at-arms, twelve litters covered in gold brocade in which the ladies of the party travelled, fifty grooms and horsemen liveried in cloth of silver, five hundred couples of hounds, with huntsmen, falconers and falcons, and even the servants and kitchen boys clad in silk or velvet. Duke Galeazzo had at least the taste to admire the treasures of the Medici Palace, and to declare that what he there saw of paintings by great masters, gems, vases, medals, statues of bronze and marble and rare manuscripts and books had

a value above that of money. His prodigal display of wealth in this visit, which cost his subjects two hundred thousand gold ducats, did not probably impress the better citizens of Florence, who had seen enough of him already to form an opinion of his character; and an accident during a representation or mystery play of the advent of the Holy Spirit, given in his honour in the Church of Santo Spirito, which was then very nearly burnt down, appeared to them as an evil omen, and may have been remembered by many at the time of his tragic end shortly after.

But this was the time of masques and pageants, which very naturally came under the influence of the then powerful movement of classical studies. Botticelli's allegorical paintings (which I shall return to in a later chapter) in such art creations as his *Birth of Venus*—which I have mentioned in connection with Poliziano's *Stanze*—and his *Primavera*—where the portrait of Giuliano has been found in the crimson-cloaked figure of Mercury—may connect themselves with this happy period in this story of Florence. "Both these paintings"—I have said in my study of the Florentine art of this time [1]—"the *Allegory of Spring* and the *Birth of Venus* were painted for the Medici Villa of Castello, and in both we see the direct influence upon the artist of that world of Greek mythology which a whole group of Florentine scholars was then busy in recovering. Thus the influence of Medicean scholarship aided Sandro, as much as Medicean patronage, in his work of this period." As directly—or even more so—do we trace the influence of the Humanistic revival in the poetry of this time, notably in that Carnival Song by Lorenzo himself, describing the

[1] Selwyn Brinton, "Renaissance in Italian Art." Part III. Chapter II, "The Medici at Florence."

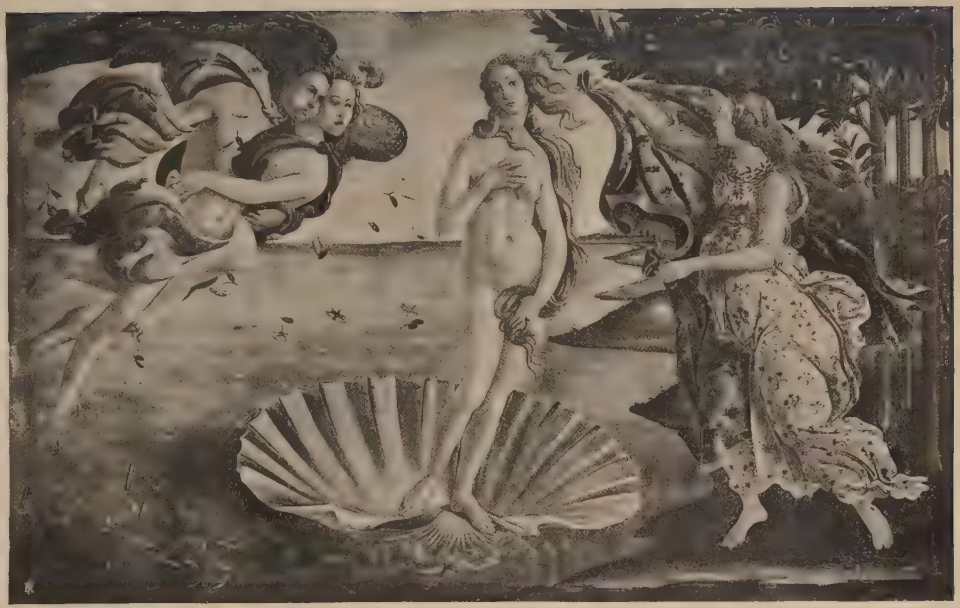
Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadné, with the wonderful lilt of its refrain :

> " Quante 'è bella giovenezza ;
> Che si fugge tuttavia ;
> Chi vuol'esser lieto sia,
> Di doman non ci è certezza."

Sometimes these amusements were more spontaneously improvised, as in the snowballing match described by Filippo Corsini in a letter to Lorenzo, in which the beautiful Marietta Palla Strozzi—whose features have come down to us in an exquisite bust by Desiderio da Settignano—took her full share of the fun. Later than the Duke of Milan's visit was that of Princess Leonora of Aragon, eldest daughter of King Ferrante of Naples, who passed through Florence on her way to be married to Ercole d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, and was lodged in the Palazzo Medici, with dancing and great festivities.[1] Another visit of this period was that of King Christian of Denmark, who was especially interested in Lorenzo's manuscripts (most of all in that of the Gospels in Greek, which had been brought from Constantinople), of which he said—" these are the true treasures of Princes."

An event of this time must, however, have claimed Lorenzo's very serious attention, and is important both in itself and in the blame which is thrown on his Government, as well as in illustrating very effectively the close connection which I have already traced in the Medici rule between their state-craft and financial interests. Perched like an eagle's nest among the hills, the old Etruscan city of Volterra, weary of civil discords, had, in 1361, committed herself to the protection of Florence ; but this did

[1] This Princess Leonora was to become later the mother of the famous Isabella d'Este, wife of the Marquis of Mantua, and Beatrice d'Este, wife of Duke Lodovico of Milan—two cultured and beautiful women of the Renaissance.



THE BIRTH OF VENUS

By Sandro Botticelli *[Uffizi Gallery, Florence*

not prevent her asserting frequently her independence, and the rising of 1472 was only one in a succession of such efforts. The immediate cause of trouble in this case seems to have been connected with the valuable alum mines near Volterra at Castel Nuovo, which were leased by Volterra to be worked by a Company, in which Lorenzo himself may, or may not, have had an interest. In any case public feeling in Volterra was hostile to the concession of the mines, which was considered illegal, and the matter was referred to Florence ; but meanwhile, without waiting for the decision, the mines were seized by the excited Volterrans.

Florence now, however, decided on asserting her authority. A Commissioner was sent out, and the Company reinstated in possession, but by this time the little hill-city was in a ferment ; fighting had commenced in the streets between the populace and the adherents of the Company, and Inghirami, one of the partners or directors, was seized by the angry mob and thrown out, a dead man, from the windows of the Public Palace. Lorenzo at this news took a strong line, even against the counsel of his trusted adviser Soderini. He decided on asserting the rights of Florence as the sovereign State, and to use armed force if it were necessary. The strength of Volterra lay in her almost inaccessible position ; when we climb up, as I have done, from the railway line below we see her perched far above us on the crest of the bare volcanic hills. But a military force of some five thousand men was now placed under the command of the famous Condottiere, Duke Federigo of Urbino, and advanced for attack upon the city, the Sforza of Milan sending six hundred of his men to help them. Within the walls of Volterra among the revolting party all was confusion. The fear was that the mob would gain control, and start

some mischief, or even massacre, and the Signory had decided to open negotiations with Federigo, when at this juncture the Milanese troops were treacherously admitted through a breach in the walls, and during the night followed by Federigo's army. These Milanese now got completely out of hand, and proceeded to sack the town ; and their bad example was soon followed by the rest of the troops. That fine old soldier, Duke Federigo, at once did all he could to stop their murderous work. He seized the ringleader of the Milanese, hanged him then and there, and issued orders that any soldier found within the walls after night would be put to death. But a good deal of harm had already been done by the brutal soldiery, and the scene of horror was aggravated by an earthquake. The trouble is clearly to be traced here to the character of the troops employed in this Condottiere warfare, to whom the prospect of loot, outrage and murder of unarmed citizens was always a more attractive programme than anything like hard fighting. That great general and noble figure of his time, Duke Federigo—whose long record of service was a clean one, and whose Court was famed throughout Italy for its high standard of culture as well as conduct—cannot fairly be blamed in this matter, any more than Lorenzo himself ; though it is quite evident that the latter was actually responsible for the strong military action taken by Florence against Volterra, and that Tommaso Soderini would have preferred milder measures.

As to how far financial interests may have influenced him it is difficult to speak with any certainty ; the evidence is by no means conclusive, though Guicciardini suggests that Lorenzo did have an interest in these disputed alum mines. We have seen how intimately the Medicean statecraft was combined with their financial

By Sandro Botticelli] PRIMAVERA (SPRING) [*Uffizi Gallery, Florence*

position, and that it was almost impossible in many cases to keep the two separate. A sum of two thousand florins of gold were voted by the Signory of Florence for the ruined city, and Lorenzo went himself to Volterra to superintend the work of assisting those who had suffered ; at the same time strong measures were taken to prevent the recurrence of these disorders. The city of Volterra was deprived of her rights of self-government, the ring-leaders of the rebel party banished, the mines restored to the Company ; and on the ruins of San Pietro and of the Bishop's Palace a strong fortress was now raised.

Suddenly an event occurred which upset all calculations of state-craft, and was destined to have terrible results, both on the fortunes of the Medici and on the future of Italy. The name of the Duke of Milan, Galeazzo Sforza, has frequently entered these pages. A detestable character, he had inherited the worst vices of his predecessors in that Dukedom, without their intellectual ability. His alliance, and even his friendship, was a strong point in Medicean policy ; but Machiavelli, in his "History," marks the visit of this Duke and his Duchess to Florence—which I have already described—as the turning-point in leading the Florentines from their Republican simplicity and austerity of manners to new methods of luxury and licence. "There was no crime," writes Sismondi, "of which that false and ferocious man was not believed to be capable. It was remarked of him that, enjoying their astonishment and despair, he always preferred to strike most suddenly and cruelly those whom he had given most reason to rely on his friendship. Among other crimes he was accused of having poisoned his mother. Not satisfied with making the most distinguished women of his State victims of his seduction or violence he took pleasure in exposing their shame to their

brothers or husbands. He not infrequently gave them up to prostitution. . . . His extravagant pomp exhausted his finances, which he afterwards recruited by the most cruel extortion on his people."

At the same time the spirit of liberty was by no means dead among the citizens of Milan, who had seen the Sforza dynasty forced upon them by the betrayal of their own generals, and as the result of a cruel siege; these elements combined with the vices of this Prince to bring about his sudden and terrible end. Three young nobles of Milan, who had been educated on the newly revived classic literature with its splendid records of civic liberty, resolved on the destruction of the tyrant. Two of them had suffered personal wrongs, for Galeazzo had outraged the sister of Girolamo Olgiati, and had deprived his friend, Lampugnani, of his patronage of the Abbey of Miramondo. The dagger was the weapon chosen; and the moment the State visit of the Duke on December 26th (S. Stephen's Day) of 1476 to the Church of San Stefano in Milan. As he stood there, between the Ambassadors of Ferrara and Mantua, the three friends struck him down together. He fell dead immediately. The church was filled with sudden tumult, the conspirators sought to raise the city to arms and liberty, but were slain by the Duke's guards; only Lampugnani escaped—to be captured later and submitted to the most horrible tortures. Amid these tortures his courage and constancy never deserted him. When the priest had urged him to repent he replied—" as for the noble action for which I am about to die, it is this which gives my conscience peace; to this I trust for pardon from the Judge of all." He was delivered again to the executioner to have his flesh torn with red-hot pincers; but as the hangman stood over him, ready to begin his horrible work,

he is said to have cried aloud (and the future has justified his words) "*Mors acerba, fama perpetua, stabit vetus memoria facti.*" (My death is bitter, but my fame eternal, the memory of my deed shall remain through time.) At the time of his martyrdom he was only twenty-two years of age.

It has been said that there is an antique grandeur about this story, strangely mingled with mediæval Catholicism, which makes it typical of the Renaissance; at the same time conspiracies of this kind became prevalent in that age throughout Italy. The influence of the classic authors—the stories of Greek freedom, or of the dagger of Brutus—had something to do with this, and could certainly be traced in the story which I have just outlined. We must remember, too, that the spirit of freedom still existed, though crushed at this time by forces which were stronger than itself; it only therefore needed a strong personal motive for justice and vengeance, such as was supplied in this case by the vices of Galeazzo, to set alight to the smouldering embers.

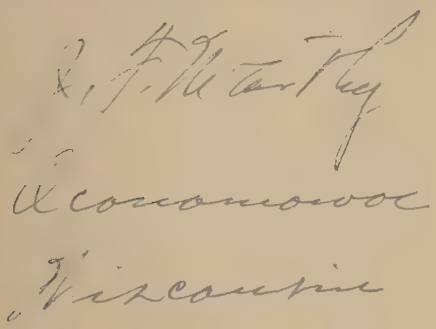
Meanwhile the death of Galeazzo left the throne of Milan vacant. His son, Giovanni, was still a child; his brothers ambitious and crafty; and his widow, Bona of Savoy, at once took steps to secure the Regency for her son, and in so doing felt that she could count on the influence and support of Lorenzo de' Medici. In fact, as soon as he had heard of the Duke's assassination, he sent to Milan the trusted Tommaso Soderini to convey his assurance of support to the Duchess, who placed at this juncture her reliance on the late Duke's Chief Minister, Cecco Simoneta. At the same time Lorenzo had no wish to quarrel with the late Duke's brothers, two of whom, Sforza, Duke of Bari, and Lodovico had been banished to France. These men now returned to Italy, and,

having commands in the Milanese army, began at once to stir up trouble against the Duchess and her Minister. They were again banished—Lodovico, called Il Moro, to Pisa, where he received every attention from the Medici. On the death of the Duke of Bari, he was recalled by the Duchess to Milan against the advice of her faithful Minister, Simoneta, who warned her that this fatal step might cost her her power and reputation, and to himself his life. In September of 1479 Lodovico returned to Milan, and acting in the name of his nephew became practically its ruler.

In Rome, too, a new Pontiff, Sixtus IV—of whom I shall say more in the next chapter—had come to rule; and, seeking to extend his power in Romagna, found his way blocked by the triple alliance of Florence, Milan and Naples, with the sympathy and support of the great Duke Federigo of Urbino. He therefore sought every way to estrange Ferrante, King of Naples, from Lorenzo, while at the same time at Milan a woman held the power for a child. The old forces which had held Italy together were dissolving, and new ones coming into force, which, in these years of 1474–1478 were slowly gathering into a storm that was to burst suddenly and with terrific force upon these two young Medici princes at Florence.

The tragic end of the tyrant Galeazzo now suggested assassination as a quick and convenient method of political change. In Milan there was a Government exposed to overthrow, in Rome an evil and ambitious Pope, greedy for territorial acquisition—these were all ingredients counting largely in this potent brew of mischief. It needed only that personal element of revenge, and this was found here just in that dangerous union, under these Medici merchant princes, of state-craft with the interest of their family ascendancy and private

finance, which we have traced frequently through the previous pages, and shall find in the next chapter to break in a cataclysm of furious vengeance, bloodshed and war over their devoted heads. When this came those glad days of *giostre* and masques, of love poems and carnival, were over for these two young princes—never to return ; the stern realities of life had claimed their place.



CHAPTER VII

THE CONSPIRACY OF THE PAZZI

THE Pazzi were one of the oldest and most famous families in Florence. The yearly solemnity of that city, the "*Scoppio del Carro*," derived its origin from the legend that Pazzo de' Pazzi had brought back from Jerusalem a fragment of the tomb of Christ, from which is struck the spark that lights the "Colombina," whose flight, successful or otherwise, is still regarded as an omen of good or bad harvest. The name of Merchant Princes, which I have applied here especially to the Medici, might indeed have been almost used of these Pazzi; for in Cosimo's time they had repudiated their nobility, and become qualified as burghers to become eligible for State offices. It was Piero de' Pazzi who, under Niccolo de' Niccoli's good counsel (v. Chap. II), had devoted himself with such enthusiasm and success to Humanistic studies; but at the same time he did not neglect the business interests of his house, and became possessed of great wealth. His friendly relations with the Medici are shown by the marriage of his nephew to Bianca, the daughter of Piero and sister of Lorenzo; and it was Andrea de' Pazzi who—with Tommaso Soderini, Luigi Guicciardini, Palmieri and Minerbetti—had been one of the five *accoppiatori* to whom Piero in his last years had very much left the management of public affairs; though my reader will

recollect that this good and just Medici ruler had been incensed with what he considered the misuse of their great powers. Like the Medici themselves these Pazzi were intelligent patrons of both Humanistic and Art culture. I have just alluded to Piero de' Pazzi in the former connection ; and it will be remembered (v. Chap. III) that it was for this family that Brunelleschi had designed the beautiful chapel in the cloister of Santa Croce, which is still one of the choicest treasures of Tuscan architecture.[1]

Such a family of merchant princes was only too likely to come, sooner or later, into collision with the Medici ; and it is here worth noting that the first symptoms of this come not so much from political as from financial antagonism. The Pazzi were a great banking house, and their Florence bank, under the management of Francesco de' Pazzi, was a serious rival to that of the Medici : so that when Lorenzo de' Medici was endeavouring to put financial difficulties in the way of the acquisition of Imola by Pope Sixtus IV, the Pazzi bank advanced him the money required, and enabled him to complete the purchase. Here once again we see how finance and politics with the Medici were inextricably intermingled ; and in this case the transaction just mentioned is worth following up more carefully, since it affects very directly our story.

Francesco della Rovere had an excellent record behind him when, at the age of fifty-seven, he became Pope under the title of Sixtus IV. He had been a general of the Franciscan Order, had a certain name for scholarship and had shown his interest in the cause of ecclesiastical reform;

[1] The Palazzo Pazzi, now Palazzo Quaratesi, in the Via Proconsolo is said to have been begun by Brunelleschi, but completed in 1462-1470 by Giuliano da Maiano. At the corner—" Canto dei Pazzi "—are this family's armorial bearings.

and there seems to have been so far nothing to suggest that he would become one of the worst men who ever filled the Chair of S. Peter, and that his evil Pontificate would be eclipsed only by that of the terrible Borgia. His besetting vice was that of too many Pontiffs during this and even a later age. To a man of middle life, placed suddenly in command of immense power and patronage, with the offerings of all Europe pouring into his coffers, the temptation to found a family proved in many cases irresistible ; but we may question if any (though here again we except the Borgia) pursued more unscrupulous methods, or lavished the resources of Christ's Church on more unworthy objects, than did Sixtus IV. The " nephews " in his case were Pietro and Girolamo Riario, whose handsome figures and not very intelligent faces have been preserved for us by Melozzo da Forli, in his fresco of Pope Sixtus receiving his librarian, Platina, in the Vatican Library. Already, in 1471, he had raised two of these nephews—Giuliano della Rovere, son of his brother, and Pietro Riario, son of his sister Jolanda—into the Sacred College of Cardinals ; while he married Girolamo Riario, another nephew, to a natural daughter of Galeazzo Sforza of Milan, and acquired for him by purchase (as I have mentioned) the city and territory of Imola, to which he intended to add other principalities in Romagna.[1]

These young men, notably Pietro and Girolamo Riario, thus found themselves suddenly raised from obscurity into high positions of Church and State, and into possession of enormous revenues, mostly derived, directly or indirectly, from ecclesiastical sources. With

[1] The Pope succeeded in adding, as we shall find later, the city of Forli, and made this Girolamo Duke ; but he was murdered later by his own subjects in 1488. Another nephew, Leonardo, Pope Sixtus married to a natural daughter of the King of Naples.

SIXTUS IV RECEIVING PLATINA
(WITH PORTRAITS OF THE POPE'S NEPHEWS)

By Melozzo da Forlì [*Vatican Gallery, Rome*

the exception of Giuliano della Rovere (who eventually became Pope as Julius I) they had neither breeding nor character to justify their position ; and their debaucheries, extravagances and folly became the scandal of Italy. When Leonora of Aragon passed through Rome on that wedding journey to Ferrara which I have just mentioned (Chap. VI), Pietro Riario—who at the age of twenty-six had become Cardinal, Patriarch of Constantinople and Archbishop of Florence—received her in a pavilion specially erected within the piazza of the SS. Apostoli, the whole of which square was then partitioned into chambers communicating with his own Palace. Their hangings were of velvet, or of white and crimson silk, with rich tapestries. Even the meanest utensils in this fantastic revel—which lasted from Saturday until Tuesday, varied by banquets, masques from the stories of Hercules and Jason and of Suzanna and the Elders, and mystery plays of the Beheading of the Baptist—were of silver. Wild boars, deer and peacocks were roasted whole : the tale of Perseus and the labours of Hercules were worked out in pastry ; on a column in the centre of this banqueting hall stood a living naked gilded boy who poured water from an urn.[1] Later this young Cardinal went, as Papal Legate, to Milan and Venice, and died soon after in Rome, possibly as the result of his mad debaucheries, though it was suggested that the Venetians had helped his end by poison.

To meet the extravagant claims of these unworthy objects of his affection, and to plant out his favourites in

[1] See account given by Symonds, " Age of the Despots " (Chapter VII) of this fantastic entertainment. The partiality for this young Cardinal shown by Pope Sixtus was so extraordinary as to have given rise to the gossip, accepted by Muratori, that he was his son. His official revenues were estimated at sixty thousand gold florins, but he died heavily in debt.

life, Sixtus IV used any means to hand. Benefices were disposed of, and the great places in the Roman Curia were known to have their price; even worse than this, he made a monopoly of the grain, created, as we are told, fictitious dearths, and sold it to his subjects at famine prices. "The bread," says one writer of the time, "made from the aforesaid corn was black, fœtid, abominable (*ater, fœtidus, abominabilis*), and was eaten of necessity, whence came frequently sickness into the State." The poet Battista Mantovano writes of this time that "our temples, priests, altars, sacred rites, prayers, . . . even Heaven is now for sale, and God Himself"; and meanwhile Italy was devastated by the constant wars which had been stirred up by Papal aggression.

But Sixtus IV, in these plans for his family aggrandizement, had found himself continually thwarted by the Medici. His acquisition of Imola was already a danger to Florence, he was known to have his eye upon Forli and Faenza for his nephew, Girolamo, and when he threatened Borgo San Sepolcro, the Signory deemed it wise to send there a force of six thousand men to protect their interests. Lorenzo's opposition to the elevation of Francesco Salviati, whom he regarded as unsuitable, to be Archbishop of Pisa had exasperated the Pope still further. Unable to take possession of his See, Archbishop Salviati remained at Rome, full of hate against the Medici [1]; while the Pope, under the influence of the same feeling, had transferred his great banking account at Rome from the Medici bank to that of the Pazzi. Thus at Rome three elements of danger came to combine at the same

[1] It is to be noted that Lorenzo had previously successfully opposed Salviati's appointment to the Archbishopric of Florence. . . . He had failed to do so in the case of Pisa, but prevented him taking possession of the see for three years. He evidently had his reasons for regarding both appointments as undesirable.

moment in the hatred of the Archbishop, the fury of Pope Sixtus, thwarted in his schemes for his family, the jealousy and bitterness of the Pazzi, who believed that the action of Lorenzo had prevented the immense wealth of Giacomo Borromeo—whose daughter Giovanni de' Pazzi had married—from coming into their family.[1]

The first move seems to have been made by Girolamo Riario, who, jealous of Lorenzo's interference with the projects for making a principality for him in Romagna, and knowing something of Francesco de' Pazzi's feelings, now approached him with a plan of revenge. This plan speedily developed into one of a change of Government in Florence, to include the assassination of both the young Medici Princes; but it was felt that this must be supported (for it was just here that the Milan conspiracy had broken down) either within Florence, or by the near vicinity of a considerable armed force, ready to take prompt advantage of the moment of confusion. Accomplices were ready to hand—one in the shape of Archbishop Salviati, who, burning with resentment for the reasons I have detailed, threw himself at once and eagerly into the scheme. But a far greater and more powerful one was to be found in Pope Sixtus himself, who could be approached without difficulty through his favourite nephew, Count Girolamo Riario.

At this point the question seems to have arisen as to whether Jacopo de' Pazzi, the head of the family at Florence but now an old man, could not be secured and

[1] A retrospective law of intestacy was passed, in 1476, which deflected this inheritance from his daughter to the nephew of Borromeo, with whom the Medici were close friends. Roscoe disputes that Lorenzo had any hand in this, but Nardi and Machiavelli criticize this as a law made for the occasion; and we have seen that the Medici used throughout financial measures as a method of attack.

induced to give them his powerful support. They needed, too, a man of action, a soldier, who would not shrink from bloodshed, and thought they had found the man in Montesecco, a captain of adventure in the Pope's service. But this man, in a secret interview in Count Girolamo's apartment—where the Archbishop was present—though he did not refuse his help in the plot, was doubtful of its success. "Look to what you do, my Lords," he said, "for Florence is a big affair"; and as the Pope's man, though he seems to have had no personal objection to murder itself, he would only undertake it with his own Lord's sanction and approval.

The yet more important interview, which now took place with the Pope himself, has been recorded for us by Montesecco at a moment when he had certain death awaiting him; and there seems every reason to accept it as a truthful statement. There, in the presence of Archbishop Salviati, Count Girolamo and Montesecco, the Pope expressed his approval that this matter of Florence should be put in hand speedily, but "without the shedding of blood." When pressed by Montesecco that the matter might turn out ill without the death of Lorenzo and Giuliano—and yet more directly by Count Girolamo, who said to him "should it happen your Holiness will pardon him who did it?"—the Pope broke out into a sudden fury. "You are a beast!" (*tu sei una bestia!*), he said to Girolamo, as if exasperated at being forced by such an absurd, or inopportune, question. Montesecco stated in his examination that "we then took leave of his Holiness, being satisfied of his intention to give us every assistance in his power, by an armed force or otherwise, as might be necessary; and when taking leave the Archbishop said, 'Holy Father, you are

then content that we shall steer this ship, for we shall steer it well!' and he replied, 'I am content.'" [1]

The impression left by this interview clearly was that the Pope was in favour of the plot, which, in fact, he did actually support by an armed force; and this impression had certainly a deciding influence upon Jacopo de Pazzi, who now hesitated no longer, but became an active supporter of the scheme.

Early in 1478 the conspirators were together in Rome, and had brought in others to their plot—two of the Salviati family, Jacopo di Poggio, who was the son of the famous Humanist, Bernardo Bandini, a reckless adventurer, and Maffei, a priest from Volterra; but the secret was well kept, and not a whisper seems ever to have reached Lorenzo. Count Girolamo now wrote to his nephew, the young Cardinal Rafaello Riario, great-nephew of the Pope, who was then pursuing his studies at Pisa, to obey any orders he might receive from the Archbishop, who soon after requested his presence at Florence, as guest of the Pazzi in their Villa at Montughi. The Cardinal (probably so instructed) expressed his desire to Lorenzo to see the treasures of Casa Medici, and proposed a Sunday, April 26th, for his visit, when he could also celebrate High Mass at the Cathedral. The Medici would surely be present at this celebration in the Cathedral, and the conspirators resolved to strike their blow then; but suddenly an unexpected difficulty arose. Montesecco had no objection to murder in itself, but he considered it as a sacrilege when it took place in a church. Under these conditions he flatly refused the job; but the two priests in the plot, Maffei of Volterra and Stefano da Bagnone, offered to take his place. They seem to have had no such scruples, but were less practised hands at

[1] V. Roscoe. Op. cit. Notes on Chapter IV.

the work; and this fact, as we shall see, affected very materially the result.

On that fatal morning of April 26th the young Cardinal Riario with his suite had ridden into Florence, dismounting at the Medici Palace. There he was received by Lorenzo, who accompanied him to the Cathedral, and conducted him to his place before the High Altar: he then himself joined his friends in the ambulatory, the passage which runs around the choir. The vast building, beneath Brunelleschi's soaring dome, must have been by that time crowded with worshippers. The conspirators were in their places, when they perceived that one of their victims, Giuliano de' Medici, had not arrived. Then Francesco de' Pazzi and Bernardo Bandini actually went across to the Palace in Via Larga to fetch him, and as they walked back to the Duomo together, laughing and joking, using the privilege of their age and friendship, Francesco de' Pazzi threw his arm around the poor lad, with the object of making sure that he had not a shirt of mail beneath his coat, one of them even remarking that he seemed to have grown stouter since his illness. Giuliano then made his way into the ambulatory to join his brother, and the group of conspirators was close beside them.

The consecration of the Host was the moment they had chosen. The bell was rung—the priest raised the consecrated wafer—the people bowed in adoration—and at that instant Bandini plunged his dagger into Giuliano's breast. He took a few steps forward and fell, when Francesco de' Pazzi threw himself upon him, with such fury stabbing him again and again, even after he was dead, that he wounded himself in the thigh. But the two priests had not managed their share of the work with such deadly success. A blow from Maffei, aimed at Lorenzo's throat, only wounded him slightly in the neck. The priest would

seem to have placed his hand upon his victim's shoulder to steady his aim, and turning quickly Lorenzo had seen the blow descending just in time to move his head. He promptly threw his mantle over his left arm as a guard, and, drawing his sword, made his way in front of the Altar, passing the terrified Cardinal, towards the door of the new Sacristy. The two priests who had attacked him had fled; but at this moment Bandini, his dagger still streaming with Giuliano's blood, was rushing upon Lorenzo. Meeting on his way Francesco Nori, a trusted servant of the Medici, he stabbed him with a wound which was instantly fatal; but, as he approached Lorenzo, the latter's friends formed a circle around him and hurried him into the Sacristy, while Poliziano closed and barred its doors of brass. In the Cathedral all was tumult. "Those who were in the church," says Valori, "alarmed at the uproar, ran up and down like mad people, asking one another what was the matter; while some thought the church was falling in." [1] A young Florentine noble, Antonio Rodolfo, had given proof of his devotion to Lorenzo by sucking the wound in his neck, which it was feared might be from a poisoned weapon: then these Florentine youths formed themselves into a compact body, and with Lorenzo in their midst conducted him to his own Palace, making a detour from the Cathedral lest he should meet the dead body of his brother.

Meanwhile, and almost at the same moment of time, there had been terrible work going forward in the Palace of the Signory: for a very important part of the plot was, necessarily, to secure its immediate possession by the conspirators, and this work had been entrusted to Archbishop Salviati, with his two kinsmen, Jacopo di Poggio and a gang of armed followers who had been brought in

[1] V. Roscoe. Op. cit. Note on Chapter IV.

for the purpose from Perugia. Here, again, we feel that this whole scheme had been very ably planned, and only failed because, in two essential points, some chance—which seemed as if the work of Divine Providence—just turned aside its evil end. The Archbishop, after leaving Lorenzo and the Cardinal at the Cathedral, collected his party, some thirty in all, and went boldly to the Palace of the Signory, sending word to the Gonfaloniere there residing that he had a message to communicate to him from the Pope. Now it so happened—as if by the Divine chance I have just mentioned—that the Gonfaloniere of this year was that very Cesare Petrucci whom we have seen at Prato (Chap. VI) as a man of cool daring and resource, whose wits must have been sharpened by the extreme hazard of his life which he had just escaped. In fact, he had lately made an alteration within the Palace, which actually at this juncture proved his own salvation and that of the Medici. Every succeeding magistrate was wont to make some alteration in the doors, as a precaution against treason ; and Petrucci had so arranged them that they closed and fastened from within by a special catch. When the Archbishop entered, and began to tell his story of a Papal brief bestowing an appointment on his hearer's son, the Gonfaloniere's sharp eye noticed that his manner was strange, that he frequently changed colour, and kept looking towards the door as if to give some signal. Alarmed at this Petrucci instantly called his guards. The Archbishop then rushed from the room, calling to his supporters that the moment had arrived : but they were trapped within by the mechanism of the doors just mentioned, and could only shout and hammer at them in vain. As he was pursuing the Archbishop Petrucci encountered Jacopo di Poggio, and catching him by the hair threw him to the ground, delivering him

to his attendants ; then calling to the guard and seizing any weapon near to hand (a cooking spit was the nearest available) he hastened to the doors of the Palace, and held them fast until the guard of the Signory arrived, and took the Archbishop and his followers into custody.

The part assigned to Jacopo de' Pazzi seems to have been to arouse the people, and then help to seize the Palace. He may have witnessed the bloodshed within the Duomo ; in any case he rode at this moment into the Piazza with a few of his adherents, calling out the watch-word of popular liberty. The account given of this whole scene in the Diary of Luca Landucci—who was then living in Florence and an eye-witness of much that he described—under the date of 26th of April, about the fifteenth hour (i.e. 3 p.m.), brings it all most vividly before us. He has just told us how the Bishop de' Salviati had spoken with the Gonfaloniere in the Palace, and "as he spoke showed himself somewhat frightened. The Gonfaloniere suspected there was treason afoot, and fastened the doors on all sides, closing the exits, and made them sound the great bell for Parliament (*a Parlamento*). And between the clamour which came from Santa Maria del Fiore from the death of Giuliano, and the sound of the great bell of the Palace the city was all at once in arms. And Lorenzo de' Medici was brought back home to his own house. And in this same time Messer Jacopo de' Pazzi hurried on horseback towards the Piazza dei Signori, crying aloud '*Popolo e Libertà*,' to seize the Palace, and, since the Bishop had not succeeded in seizing the Palace, he could not get an entrance. Then he went towards his own house, and was advised to get away while he could, and fled by the Porta alla Croce, together with many footmen and with Andrea de' Pazzi.

"By this time all the city was in arms, in the Piazza

or at the house of Lorenzo de' Medici. And dead in the Piazza lay a whole company of men of those who had taken part in the conspiracy, and had been hurled from the windows of the (Palace of the) Signory into the Piazza, still alive; among the others a priest of the Bishop's following lay dead in the Piazza, and was cut in four pieces and his head taken off, and for the whole day that same head was carried on a lance through all Florence, and his torn legs and a quarter of his body in front with an arm, borne aloft upon a pike through the whole city by men crying all the time aloud, 'Death to the traitors.' (*Muoino i traditori!*)

"In that same evening the Cardinal (di Riario) was led into the Palace, and scarcely was his life preserved in the going there, and all his company taken so that not one of them escaped. The Bishop (Archbishop Salviati) remained captured in the Palace along with the others. And that evening they hanged Jacopo di Messer Poggio from the windows of the Palagio de' Signori and in like manner the Bishop of Pisa (Salviati), and Franceschino de' Pazzi naked, and about twenty men between the Palace of the Signory and of the Podestà and of the Capitano, all hung from the windows."

The people of Florence were by this time thoroughly infuriated and took a terrible vengeance. It was due to Lorenzo's personal intercession that the young Cardinal Riario, who seems to have been throughout merely a tool of the conspirators, escaped with his life; but he is said to have been so terrified that "henceforth he never regained his natural colour," and was still detained in confinement. Francesco de' Pazzi had been found at the house of his uncle Jacopo; he had been dragged from his bed, naked and bleeding, to the Palace and hung from its windows beside the Archbishop, and the grim story

of these horrors—as related by Poliziano—tells that this latter, in his dying frenzy, seized the naked body of Francesco with his teeth. Messer Jacopo de' Pazzi was captured by the peasants as he was escaping in Romagna, brought back into the city and immediately hanged, also from the Palace windows. Sandro Botticelli was commissioned, later in the year, to paint upon the façade of the Palace this terrible scene of dead and dying men hanging from the windows over the heads of the maddened crowd; and did so in such a natural manner that Vasari tells us that the work was a wonder.[1]

Not one of the conspirators escaped. Even Bernardo Bandini, who had got safely out of Italy and taken refuge in Constantinople, was seized there by the Sultan Mahomet and sent in chains to Florence, as a mark of this ruler's sympathy and respect for Lorenzo de' Medici. The priests who had been in the plot, among the actual assassins, had sought shelter in a Benedictine monastery, but were discovered there by the people and immediately slaughtered; Montesecco was taken later (May 1st), as he was attempting to escape, and put to the torture. His confession—to which I have alluded—is of the greatest importance in showing who were the persons really responsible for this conspiracy; after making this confession he was beheaded in the Palace of the Podestà.

We have seen throughout that the Medici—both Lorenzo and his father—were averse to bloodshed and reprisals. It had been through his influence that the young Cardinal Riario had not been killed with the others; and he used that influence to check the reprisals taken by the people, who were exasperated by the cruel murder of the

[1] Vasari at the same time attributed this painting erroneously to Andrea del Castagno.

young and popular Giuliano, even, it is said, declaring that he had more to fear from the zeal of his friends than from the daggers of the assassins. In these three days—from April 26th to the 28th—we are told by Landucci in his Diary that more than seventy men had been hanged—" and on the 29th day," he adds, " of that month things became a little quieter and more settled, without more bloodshed ; but even then men's hearts were mazed with terror. And on the 15th day of May, 1478, Messer Jacopo de' Pazzi was disinterred from Santa Croce, and buried under the walls of Florence. And on the 17th day of May, 1478, about the twentieth hour, the children disinterred him yet again, and with a piece of cord which he still had about his neck they dragged him all through Florence, and when they reached the door of his own house they fastened the cord on the bell of the door, and pulled it saying, '*Picchia l'uscio*' (Knock at the door) ; and then, not knowing what more to do with the body, they went on to the Bridge at Rubaconte, and threw it into Arno."

The name of the great Pazzi family was blotted out of Florence. It was forbidden henceforth even to pronounce it—anyone who should marry into that race was excluded from holding public office—their coat of arms, with its dolphins, was erased and their property confiscated. A little later Lorenzo received a visit from Antonio di San Gallo, who disclosed to him that—some twelve months before his death—a lady of the Gorini family had born to his brother, Giuliano, a son, to whom, as sponsor, he had given the name of Giulio. This child, whom Lorenzo at once took under his protection, was to become later the Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, who became Pope under the title of Clement VII, and was destined to pass through those terrible days for Rome itself and the Papacy, which

seemed almost like a Divine vengeance for past wrong-doing.

Meanwhile, the fury of Count Girolamo, when he heard in Rome of the failure of his well-planned conspiracy, was only equalled by that of the Pope himself. He summoned an armed guard and seized the person of the Florentine ambassador, Donato Acciaiuoli, whom the Pope at first intended to cast into the prisons of S. Angelo; but was induced to release him through the protests of the ambassadors of Milan and Venice, who declared that if this were done they would share his fate. Lorenzo—it may be remembered—had prudently held the young Cardinal Riario as a hostage; but the Pope Sixtus hardly waited for the negotiations to be completed which secured the Cardinal's freedom before he published a Bull of Excommunication, placing Florence and all her territory under his Interdict. In this document—after alluding to the gentleness and moderation of his own character, and mentioning that "according to the example of Our Saviour he had long suffered in peace the insults and injuries of his enemies"—he goes on to say that he would have continued his forbearing behaviour, had not Lorenzo and the magistrates of Florence, "inflamed with fury, instigated by diabolical suggestions, like savage dogs in their madness, laid violent hands on ecclesiastical persons —Oh grief and unutterable crime! (*proh dolor et inauditum scelus!*) hung up the Archbishop, imprisoned the Cardinal Rafaello and slaughtered their followers." He then goes on to excommunicate Lorenzo, the Gonfaloniere and officers of State, pronouncing them to be culpable, sacrilegious, anathematized, excommunicate—their property to revert to the Church, their houses to be levelled to the ground; and excludes the city of Florence and her territories from the enjoyment of all and any spiritual

functions, unless within one month the offenders were brought to punishment.

Meanwhile, the effect of this Pope's intrigues with Lorenzo's former ally, King Ferrante of Naples, became apparent. As early as May 12th that monarch's son, the Duke of Calabria, was in Rome preparing for war ; and by the early days of July the troops of Naples under his command were already upon Florentine territory, in the neighbourhood of Montepulciano, while his trumpeters arrived in Florence, bringing his master's defiance to the Republic and another letter from the Pope, framed in even stronger terms. The reply of Lorenzo, "*Pro domini Responsio brevi*," to the Pope's letter, must have been sent off after this attack had commenced. It is actually very moderate in terms, though that very moderation shows biting irony in acknowledging the Pope's assertion that he was only waging war against our State to free it from a tyrant, and thanking him for this demonstration of paternal affection. Lorenzo seems to have felt the humour of the situation, that he and his people should be excommunicated because he himself had failed to be assassinated, as arranged ; but all he asks here is that an assessor should be appointed to weigh the charges against him " so that in casting out a tyrant neither the Pope nor the Florentines shall prove themselves tyrants."

But the later letter of the Signory of Florence to the Pope, when on July 21st the Bull of Excommunication and Interdict had been put into force, used very plain language to His Holiness. If the latter describes Lorenzo as a tyrant—" we and our people with one voice acclaim him the defender of our liberties ; we are prepared to sacrifice everything for the safety and liberty of the State. . . . Had he permitted himself to be slaughtered by those most atrocious satellites whom you dispatched

hither, had we failed to recover our Palazzo Publico, the citadel of our liberties, from the hands of your traitors, had we delivered up ourselves, our magistrates and our citizens to you to be assassinated then there would be no cause for contention between us." And the letter concludes with some very plain and scarcely palatable advice —" Since you have sat in the Holy Seat it is known to all how your office has been employed ; it is well known who is the real enemy of the public good. Put on then a better mind. Remember your office and the Vicarship of Christ. Remember that the Keys were not given you for such uses."[1]

Lorenzo at this crisis must have felt Florence, united and defiant, behind him. The horrible crime, which had cost him his brother and threatened his own life, aroused general reprobation ; and the French King Louis XI actually sent his ambassador, De Comines, to the city to express his sympathy. At the same time the League which the Pope had brought together against Florence, including the forces of Naples, Rome, Siena, Lucca and Urbino, was a powerful one ; and the command of these armies was entrusted to Duke Federigo of Urbino, one of the ablest generals of his time. Lorenzo, apart from the friendly attitude of the French King, could count on the sympathy of Duchess Bona of Savoy, then ruling in Milan. But Sixtus managed to tie her hands by stirring up the Genoese against Milan, and by inducing the Swiss mountaineers of Uri,[2] in January of 1479, to descend into Lombardy ; while soon after the brothers of Duke Galeazzo seized the power from the Duchess, deprived

[1] Cf. E. L. S. Horsburgh. Op. cit. Chapter X.

[2] Under this Pope, and as a result of his intrigues, for the first time the foreign invader was brought into Lombardy—in the form of those Swiss who were to play such a terrible part in the wars of invasion which followed at the close of the century.

her of the Regency, imprisoned and killed her ministers, and proclaimed her young son of twelve to be of age, though the real power passed entirely into the hands of Lodovico il Moro.

The war flamed out now through Central Italy, and the position of Florence, who had to face single-handed the forces of the League, was a very serious one. The plague had broken out in the city ; Lorenzo had sent his wife and children for greater security to Pistoia, and the enemy, advancing on Florence, laid siege to Arezzo ; but here they experienced a vigorous and determined resistance from the Aretines, and, after the two armies had regarded each other for some time with mutual apprehension, a truce was agreed to by their leaders, the Dukes of Urbino and Calabria for the League and the Duke of Ferrara at the head of the Florentine forces, and these two armies went into their winter quarters, leaving Florence still exposed to the peril of war and with no relief from its expenses.

Lorenzo now employed his efforts in diplomacy, but without any marked success. A mission of Florentine citizens to the Pope found him still obdurate. The sympathy of the King of France, whose intervention with the Pope was even supported at Rome by King Edward IV of England, led to no results : but more practical assistance came from Venice, who sent a body of troops to help the Florentines, and with these reinforcements, at the expiration of the truce, the Florentines felt themselves strong enough to take the offensive in the Val di Chiana.

Dividing their forces into two commands, one body of Florentine troops advanced to threaten Perugia, and encountered the enemy near the Lake of Thrasymene, the scene of Hannibal's terrible defeat of the Romans. It is said the recollection of that defeat of Roman soldiers in

the same surroundings inspired the Papal troops with terror; in any case they were soon repulsed, and the victorious Florentines advanced to invest Perugia. On the other hand, the second Florentine division was not equally successful. There had been some discontent in the year preceding in Florence at the conduct of this war by the Duke of Ferrara; and a quarrel among the leaders —more especially between himself and the Marquis of Mantua—led to his retiring, with his immediate followers, from his command at Poggio Imperiale. The whole campaign is an instance—which was effectively used later by Machiavelli—of the futile and expensive character of this mercenary warfare; most of all when, as in this case, there was a country like Florence really fighting for justice and her existence, while the leaders on both sides were mainly occupied with prospects of plunder and personal feuds.

But on this occasion the Duke of Calabria, finding the Florentines to have lost their leader and to be weakened in numbers, advancing rapidly from Chiusi by way of Siena, made a sudden and successful attack (on September 7th) on the Florentine position at Poggio Imperiale. The Florentines, taken by surprise and without confidence in their new leaders, took to flight; the way to the city was left open, and there followed something like a panic in Florence. Fortunately Costanzo Sforza rallied his own following among the troops and saved the Florentine standard; and the Duke of Calabria, instead of taking his advantage, sat down with his army to invest the fortified town of Colle.

The siege proved a long one, and possesses special interest in the conditions of its defence and eventual capture. The Duke of Urbino had brought with him in this campaign, as his military engineer, the famous

Francesco di Giorgio Martini, and artillery was used on both sides, in the defence as well as the attack of strong places. " In the ecclesiastical armies," says Dennistoun, in his account of this campaign,[1] " there were five field pieces, called bombards, distinguished by such startling names as the Cruel, the Desperate, the Victory, Ruin, None of your Jaw," etc. One of the largest of these could discharge balls of stone weighing from three hundred and seventy to three hundred and eighty pounds ; the art of casting these early cannon in two portions, the tube and tail, was pursued in Siena ; though they might not have had much effect on the result of a modern battle, at this time they were a formidable novelty. Francesco di Giorgio, in the siege of Castellina (August 14th–18th, 1478) planted a battery of these Sienese and Papal " bombards," and—in spite of the fact that the architect and military engineer of Lorenzo de' Medici, one Giuliano di San Gallo, was among the defenders—in four days he opened a breach in the walls, and captured the city ; but in the case of Colle there were bombards also used for defence, and during the siege of six weeks 1024 shots were fired on both sides. The supply of the great stones used in these heavy guns, and their transport over bad country roads was a matter of difficulty. Buffaloes, as well as oxen, were called into service, and one urgent letter of Duke Federigo, when in camp before Colle, to the Sienese magistrates mentions that " the muzzle of the last bombard which burst is still here, for its carriage broke down on the march . . . I therefore earnestly beg your Lordships to send hither all the Popes' and His Majesty's buffaloes that you have and as many of your own as possible, with such oxen as you can. . . . Let other carts be

[1] V. J. Dennistoun, " Memoirs of the Dukes of Urbino." Vol. I, Book II, Chapter XI.

ready to replace those which may break down, with lots of buffaloes and oxen . . . and in God's name if ever you used diligence do so now, that these carts, buffaloes and oxen arrive quickly, seeing the Lord Duke (of Calabria) and Messer Lorenzo have already done the same."

These efforts, which show the initial difficulties of artillery transport, followed the taking of Colle, which fell on November 14th of 1479; but in the meantime Florence had time to organize her defence, to recall her troops from Perugia to the city; and it was now the period for both sides to retire into winter quarters, while the leaders of the Papal armies, the Dukes of Urbino and Calabria, returned to Siena, where they were received with honours.

Thus ended another campaign of inconclusive warfare, marked by devastation rather than victory on either side; yet as Dennistoun remarks, "It seems clear that had the confederates of Lower Italy then" (after the victory of Poggio Imperiale) "marched upon the capital instead of loitering upon the Val d'Elsa, the fondest wishes of Sixtus IV might have been gratified." Lorenzo himself was fully alive to the danger of the position. His own resources and those of his country were being wasted upon this protracted and mismanaged mercenary warfare; the enthusiasm of his friends and supporters, which had been at white heat during the conspiracy and after the unjust attack on Florence of Sixtus IV, was slowly evaporating under the continued strain of the conflict. Florence had boldy defied the Interdict, but it was still a terrible weapon against her; and now the plague had come to add to her sufferings.

The situation was becoming more and more difficult, if not yet impossible; and Lorenzo's quick brain was seeking for a method of escape. He found it in a resolve which, apparently Quixotic, was to be in the end justified

by its success, and, though full of danger to himself, to be the means of saving himself as well as his country. It will be remembered that the real power in Milan had come into the hands of Lodovico Sforza, who now offered his services to Lorenzo towards effecting a reconciliation with King Ferrante of Naples, at the same time that Lorenzo himself seems to have been in correspondence with the Duke of Calabria. The strength of the attack of Pope Sixtus, from a military point of view, had been in his cleverly planned alliance with Naples. If that alliance could be weakened, and Naples detached, the situation would be saved; and this fact sufficiently accounts for Lorenzo's sudden decision to go himself to Naples, and, as the Duke of Calabria seems to have suggested to him, "to throw himself into the King's arms"—that is to say, to try to convince the King in a personal meeting of the injustice and bad policy, even from his own point of view, of this war, and thus bring him to a separate peace.

Lorenzo can have been under no possible delusion as to the terrible risk he was taking. It is this which lifts his action from being merely a brilliant stroke of diplomacy into that of heroic self-sacrifice. If in these pages I have not given a very complimentary estimate of the character of Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, nor even of Pope Sixtus IV, it is difficult for me to speak any better of Ferrante, King of Naples. He had entrapped the famous Condottiere Piccinino by an invitation to visit him at Naples with his bride, and after twenty-one days of festival had had him secretly murdered. "Ferdinand," says Symonds, "was a demon of dissimulation and treachery . . . his ferocity bordered on madness. He used to keep the victims of his hate in cages, where their misery afforded him the same delight as some men derive from watching the antics of monkeys. Wretches mutilated for the

neglect of his hounds extended their handless stumps for charity through his villages [1]; like Sixtus IV he made the sale of corn a royal monopoly, trafficking in the hunger of his subjects"; and, after mentioning the murder of Piccinino, the same writer adds "not less perfect as a specimen of diabolical cunning was the vengeance which Ferdinand, counselled by his son Alfonso, inflicted on the barons who conspired against them." Indeed, the words here used of this son might equally apply to the father—"The chambers of his palace in Naples were thronged with ghosts by battalions, pale spectres of the thousands he had reduced to starvation, bloody phantoms of the barons he had murdered after nameless tortures."

This was the man to whom Lorenzo, with full knowledge of his character and actions, now decided to entrust himself, with only one weapon in his hands, that of his own marvellous personality. He had evidently made up his mind at the conclusion of actual hostilities towards the end of November, for he had sent Fillipo Strozzi,[2] on November 24th of 1479, to tell King Ferdinand that he would place himself in his hands without conditions, if he would restore peace and give back to Florence the cities that had been taken; and he himself left the city without letting his intentions be known, and addressed from the little town of San Miniato al Tedesco in Val d'Arno a letter to the Signory, detailing his resolve. "It seems to me," he there said, "that peace is become indispensable to us, and as all other means of obtaining it have failed I have rather chosen to incur some degree

[1] Both these statements are attested by Pontanus in his "De Immanitate," 1518.

[2] The exact words as used by Filippo Strozzi are "*A dire alla Maestà del Re che totalmente gli si rimetteva nelle braccia, e che in quello modo che S.M. lo volesse, o grande o basso, dentro o fuori, era contento di modo che S.M. rendesse pacie alla ciptà e le terre tolte.*"

of danger to myself than to suffer the city to continue under its present difficulties. I therefore intend, with your permission, to proceed directly to Naples; conceiving that, as I am the person chiefly aimed at by our enemies, I may, by delivering myself into their hands, perhaps be the means of restoring peace to my fellow-citizens . . . I am content to take this risk, seeing that it is possible that the only aim of our enemies is my destruction . . . and perhaps it may be the will of God that, as this war was begun by the blood of my brother and of myself, it may now by my means be concluded. All that I desire is that my life and my death, my prosperity and my misfortunes, may contribute towards the welfare of my native land."

This letter was received in Florence with very varied feelings. His own friends and those of the Medici regarded the step with grave anxiety; even those who thought most highly of his prudence were inclined to question its wisdom, and Valori relates that when the letter was read in the Senate no one could refrain from weeping. The Signory, however, gave their formal approval to his decision, and sought to strengthen his position by appointing him as their special Ambassador to the Court of Naples, with full powers to negotiate a peace. These credentials reached him before he set sail from Pisa; and in the entire course of negotiations he was in constant communication with the Ten. But this does not justify his critics in suggesting that he was playing a clever part throughout, or that, as Perrens remarks, "*Il créait, il developpait déjà la légende, se posant en victime qui s'offrait en sacrifice*"; since this game was certainly at the hazard of his life.[1]

The voyage to Naples was made in fair weather, and Lorenzo drew from this a happy augury for the future

[1] V. F. T. Perrens. Op. cit. Vol. I, Chapter III.

success of his mission. "See," he said to his friends, "how Heaven smiles upon our undertaking." Upon arriving at Naples he found that the King had directed the commanders of his galleys to receive him with due honours, and had even sent his son, Federigo, and grandson, Ferdinand, to meet him on landing. His fame had gone before him, and the people of Naples poured out to see their illustrious visitor, and gave him a great popular ovation. He here justified his title of the Magnificent by his splendid generosity, and delighted the people by his kindly acts, giving dowries to poor girls and buying out galley slaves; while his personal magnetism and charm made the King to exclaim of him, in the words of the poet Claudian, that his presence surpassed even his reputation —"*Vicit præsentia famam.*"

There can be no doubt that he employed all that magnetic charm, and all his powers of argument, to convince his host that his own best interest lay in returning to the old friendship and alliance of Naples with Florence. He may have pictured to him the terrible scenes described in this chapter, when he had so nearly lost his own life. He may have pointed out the danger to Naples from the aggressive policy of Pope Sixtus under the dominating influence of his nephews. He might have touched on the dangerous claims to Naples of the House of Anjou; have even given some encouragement to the designs of the Duke of Calabria upon Tuscany and Siena; and shown to him how in the past the triple league of Milan, Florence and Naples had proved itself to be the safeguard of Italy. His efforts were at length successful, and a treaty was actually in course of preparation; but in the meantime Pope Sixtus had taken alarm at the news of this successful visit of his enemy, and was pressing King Ferdinand, making the claim that it was for him,

the Pope, to arrange any terms of accommodation, and that meanwhile Lorenzo de' Medici should be sent to him in Rome. To this demand Ferdinand—most fortunately for his guest—returned a flat refusal. But while Lorenzo's fate still hung in the balance he must have had some terribly anxious moments—all the more so as he was compelled so completely to hide his feelings; and Valori relates that "he who throughout the day showed himself to all men so joyous and pleasant, at night, as though he were another person, gave himself up to grief and lamentation—now at his own unhappiness, now at the misfortunes of his country."

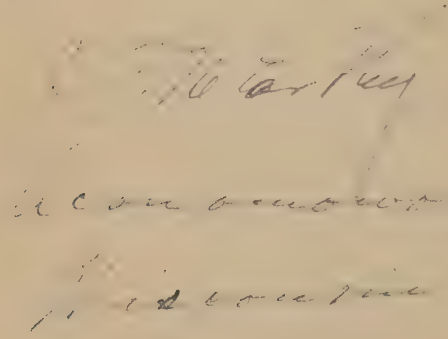
At length the treaty was agreed on, and, as finally concluded, its terms arranged that Florence should ask the Pope's pardon for her offences, that the places taken from the Florentines should be restored at the King's discretion, the survivors of the Pazzi family liberated from the tower of Volterra, and the Duke of Calabria receive a sum of money for his expenses; and that, subject to the above, a treaty of alliance should exist between Naples and Florence, and both parties to the treaty assist each other mutually in the defence of their dominions. As soon as this matter was concluded Lorenzo could feel that his difficult mission was accomplished; and he instantly embarked for Pisa, notwithstanding the entreaties of his host, who wished him to prolong his visit. Before his departure King Ferrante had presented him with a beautiful horse; and in thanking him Lorenzo observed that "the messenger of joyful tidings should be well mounted." But he must have recognized the risk he would have run by delaying his departure, and this was shown by the fact that no sooner had he sailed from Naples than the King received a letter from the Pope, with proposals which might have not only upset the treaty, but

have led to his own destruction. On receiving this letter King Ferdinand sent an urgent message to his visitor that, at whatever place he might receive it, he should immediately return to Naples, where the ambassador of Sixtus IV was awaiting him. But Lorenzo, having once escaped from the jaws of the lion, did not evidently feel disposed to confide a second time in his good behaviour. Touching at Leghorn he returned to Pisa, where the result of his embassy was already known, and where he was received with joy by the people. Then he hastened back to Florence, where a tremendous popular welcome was awaiting him. The faithful Poliziano, poet and scholar, who had been beside him during those terrible moments in the Duomo, sought in vain to approach him; but was held back by the applauding and excited crowd, and reduced to expressing his emotions in Latin verse, wherein he describes his patron and friend as towering above the tumultuous throng—

> "Maxima sed densum capiunt vix atria vulgus;
> Tota salutantum vocibus aula fremit,
> . . . Cunctis celsior ipse patet."

Meanwhile, the political horizon had completely altered. The Pope, alarmed by the descent of the Turk into Italy—torn lately by these unhappy and distracting wars—and by the terrible fate of Otranto in Apulia, whose defenders and inhabitants had been massacred without mercy, had suddenly changed his attitude. The Duke of Calabria, now recalled to defend the south, abandoned for ever his designs on the Tuscan cities. King Ferrante, under the pressure of this Turkish terror, made no difficulty in the restitution of the captured fortresses; and the Pope himself was not unwilling to accept whatever apologies Florence might be disposed to offer. This disaster to Italy, which was none of his seeking (though

even here his enemies have sought to blame him), helped at this very moment to secure and complete the triumph of Lorenzo. He had achieved peace for his country and beloved city at the risk of his own safety. "All men," says Machiavelli, "praised him beyond measure, declaring that by his prudence he had recovered in peace all that adverse fortune had taken from him in war." Henceforth his position was unassailable. A new epoch of peace and prosperity was to open for his country; a brief but golden age, through which Lorenzo de' Medici was to guide the destinies of Italy.



CHAPTER VIII

THE MEDICI AS PATRONS OF PAINTING

IF in the preceding chapters we have shown something of the direct and inspiring influence of the Medici merchant princes—and more especially of Cosimo himself—upon the scholarship and the plastic arts of this time, we shall not find this less so when we come to turn over that fascinating page of art story which treats of the painting of Florence in the fifteenth century. For here we shall find the same influences at work, but treating an art medium less severe in form, less directly under the tradition of the antique world ; more open, therefore, to the time-spirit of the age, and with all the added charm and glory of colour.

Throughout the story of Italian art of the Renaissance, while sculpture follows on the steps of architecture, painting is always in the same relation as this to sculpture : but the Florentine School, after its remarkable advance under Giotto, had with the followers of a later generation been sterilized and formal—a mere repetition of themes and figures in sacred story which Giotto and his close followers had handled with inspired imagination. Right down into the very time which we have been surveying we find such painters as Neri de' Bicci holding on to the Giottesque tradition, bringing—as Crowe and Cavalcaselle remark of him—" art to the level of a trade, and filling Tuscany with pictures at a time when Ghiberti, Donatello, Uccello.

Masaccio and Angelico laboured." Such was his industry —I have said of him elsewhere,[1] while admitting the quaint charm of some of his angelic figures—that Baldinucci's story of his grandfather, Lorenzo, might apply to him. ". . . Fill the porringer" (for supper) "I shall paint a saint and come"; but meanwhile the new leaven was working through the traditional forms of Christian art, and feeling its way towards technical progress, as a preliminary to yet further advance.

We have seen (Chap. III) how Brunelleschi had given to the Florentines of his time his theory of perspective, drawing from this point of view the Baptistery and Cathedral Square, and the Piazza and Palace of the Signory; we saw, too, that Ghiberti had made effective use of this new science in the second of his Baptistery doors, and that into his workshop Paolo Doni had entered as *garzone* or apprentice. This same painter, whom the Florentines called Paolo Uccello, from his love of birds, is so characteristic a figure that I here take him first in the art of his time—when at Florence painting was turning her eyes from the celestial vision and the story of the saints to this actual world we have to live in; when, while she, too, hears the antique message, she is busied no less with the laws of perspective and foreshortening; and the beauty and interest of living nature—of man himself as well as the birds, the beasts and the flowers—came to attract her on every side.

But beside this figure of Uccello a whole group of Florentine painters now come forward to claim our attention by work of the greatest interest and value. Dello Delli, who had been Paolo's assistant in the frescoes of S. Maria Novella, Andrea del Castagno, Pesellino,

[1] Cf. Selwyn Brinton, "The Renaissance in Italian Art." Part I, "Pisa and Florence."

Alessio Baldovinetti, Domenico Veneziano, Fra Filippo Lippi are among these; but over them all one form towers above the rest, dominating this art of his time. "Masaccio," it has been said, "deserves the credit of having successfully carried out not merely the laws (of perspective), which Uccello and Brunelleschi were beginning to codify and base on mathematical rules, but that other perspective which deals with atmosphere, which places objects on their planes of relief and rounding by increase or decrease of the density of the medium in which the figures stand." In Masaccio's work what Vasari calls the modern manner appears definitely before us. He handles his subjects with a breadth and dignity of his own. His groups of the Apostles move gravely in the circumambient air; and with him "for the first time in art the forms of living persons are shown moving in a transparent medium of light, graduated according to distance and harmonized by tones that indicate an atmospheric unity." [1]

Masaccio's great achievement, his contribution to the art of his own and all time were the frescoes of the Brancacci chapel, within the Carmine church of Florence. These were "the school in which all succeeding artists studied"; on these walls the new message of art was unfolded, and a brief analysis of these famous paintings is here essential to our subject. Tommaso di Ser Giovanni, called Masaccio (great big Tom), was the son of a notary who had property, and probably resided in Castel San Giovanni di Val d'Arno, and at the age of nineteen was already registered (1421) under his name of Maso di Ser Giovanni in the Guild of the Speziali of Florence. The elder painter, Masolino da Panicale, who became a mem-

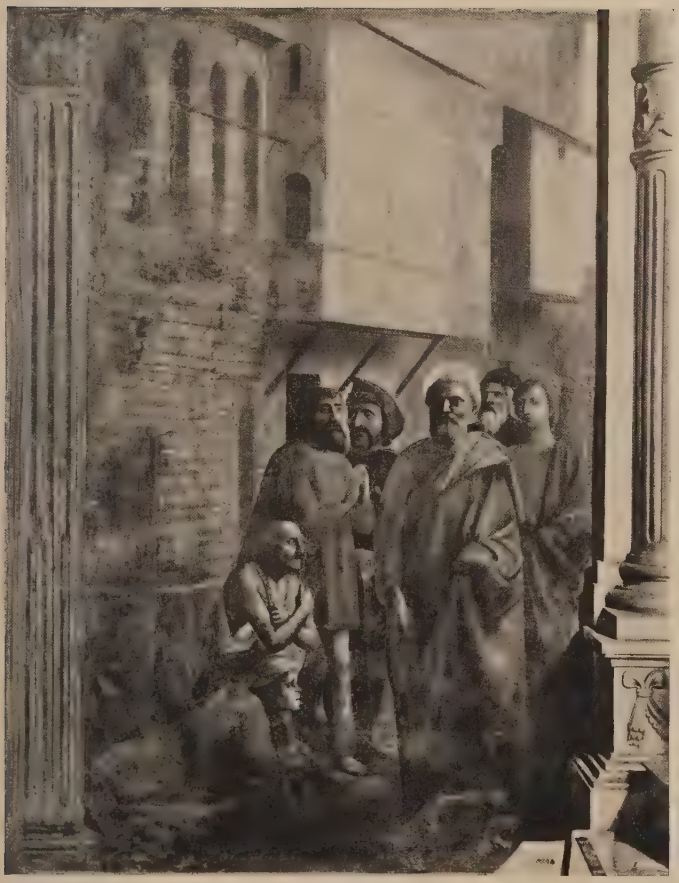
[1] Cf. Symonds, "The Renaissance in Italy." Chapter V, "The Fine Arts."

ber of the same Guild a year later, was working also in the Brancacci chapel, where the figures of Adam and Eve in the *Temptation* and other frescoes differ from Masaccio's broader style in their clean, precise drawing. If Masolino was Masaccio's predecessor in the Brancacci chapel as well as his teacher (and the respective ages of the two painters are in favour of this view), the pupil soared very soon far above this master and his contemporaries.[1] The subject of this great series of frescoes in the Carmine chapel is the story of S. Peter, though other episodes, such as the *Temptation* and *Expulsion from Eden*, have been introduced; and in the scene where the Saint restores the King's son to life Masaccio's work has been completed by Filippino Lippi. But in studying these frescoes I wrote—"Masaccio is surely before us in the realistic Baptism of the upper tier (where the nude figure of a shivering youth waiting to be baptized is a clever tribute to the spirit of naturalism in Florentine art), and the frescoes below, where the Saint advances, a figure full of majesty, towards the crippled and sick beneath the city walls." [2]

It was then already coming into use with Florentine painters to introduce into these sacred subjects groups of contemporaries, either patrons, persons of outstanding interest, or, as here, the artists themselves. Filippino Lippi, when completing here his scene of *S. Peter before the Roman Proconsul*, had introduced the portraits of

[1] Crowe and Cavalcaselle ("History of Painting in Italy," Vol. I, Chapter XXIV) throw doubt on Masolino's share in the Brancacci chapel, on the evidence of his fresco paintings for Cardinal Branda Castiglione at Castiglione di Olona. "Could Masolino have so changed his artistic nature as to transform a style like that of Castiglione into that of Masaccio?"

[2] Cf. Selwyn Brinton, "The Renaissance in Italian Art." Part III, Chapter I.



S. PETER BY HIS SHADOW HEALS THE SICK

By Masaccio] [*Brancacci Chapel, Church o the Carmine, Florence*

Antonio Pollaiuolo, of Sandro Botticelli and of himself; and Vasari tells us that, earlier than this, Masaccio had painted in this church of the Carmine, in *terra verde*, "over the door which goes from the convent into the cloisters a countless number of citizens in mantle and cape going in a religious procession . . . among them Filippo di Ser Brunelleschi in pattens (*zocchi*), Donatello, Masolino da Panicale who had been his master, Antonio Brancacci who had made him paint the chapel, Niccolo da Uzzano, Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici and others."

This chapel thus became the school where the artists of the time came to study, to work, to find inspiration and absorb the new methods there suggested, and Vasari mentions among them Fra Filippo Lippi, Filippino, who completed the work, Alessio Baldovinetti, Andrea del Castagno, Andrea Verocchio, Domenico Ghirlandajo, Sandro Botticelli, as well as Leonardo da Vinci, Perugino and Michelangelo, as being among "those who became famous through studying their art in this chapel." The first mentioned of these, Fra Filippo Lippi, had been placed when a mere child with the monks of the Carmine, not so far from the time when Masaccio had come to paint this chapel of the Brancacci; and watching the artist working upon the frescoes, perhaps even getting a kindly hint of guidance, the young monk had caught the inspiration from this new message in art. Already, in 1430–1431, Fra Filippo's name appears in the convent records with the qualification of "painter"; but he first comes before us in his *Coronation of the Virgin*, which was for long one of the treasures of the Florence Academy of Fine Arts. The multitude of angel forms, bearing in their hands white lilies, throng into the scene, filling the sides of the panels; while in the centre Christ crowns the kneeling Virgin; and beneath these glad angels and saints

there peeps into the picture no other than the Frate himself, a little shamefacedly, but bearing his card of admission to that saintly gathering in the words, *Is perfecit Opus.*

Here we find that, as in his two paintings of the *Nativity* for Cosimo de' Medici—the one to be the altar-piece for the chapel in the Medici Palace, surrounded later by Gozzoli's lovely frescoes, the other painted (Vasari) for the wife of Cosimo—the same colour scheme of silvery greys prevails, in which the blue and crimson of the Virgin's robe makes an abrupt but effective contrast. And Cosimo was not only a good patron, but a tolerant and kindly friend to the Frate in the difficulties in which his by no means monastic temperament frequently involved him. Vasari gives us the story of Cosimo having shut him in a room within his house, so that he should lose no time in getting forward with the work in hand ; and how, after two days of this confinement, the Frate, "*spinto da furore amoroso,*" cut up sheets one evening with a pair of scissors, and, letting himself down from the window, "gave himself to many days of pleasure." Then how—Cosimo having missed him, and searched in vain—in time he returned to his work, and was given his liberty ; "his patron having repented of having shut him in in the past, when he reflected on his mad folly and the dangers he might have run."

In 1456 Fra Filippo Lippi was chaplain to the Convent of Santa Margherita at Prato—the little Tuscan city which contains in her Cathedral his delightful frescoed series of the story of S. John the Baptist and S. Stephen—and was engaged on an altar-piece for the High Altar of the convent church, in which work he obtained permission from the Abbess that one of her nuns should sit for him for the figure of the Virgin. At that time in the convent

were two young sisters, the daughters of Francesco Buti, a Florentine silk merchant, who, however, had died, leaving his brother Antonio with a large family on his hands ; and this brother had placed the two girls, Spinetta and Lucrezia, within the Prato convent. Lucrezia, the younger, was at this time about twenty-three, and the Frate, though not far off fifty, was still accessible to the tender passion ; he declared his feelings to his model, and obtained a not unfavourable response.

There seems strong reason to suppose, from later developments, that her elder sister, Spinetta, was in sympathy and helping in the whole matter. That great festival at Prato of the " Cintola," the girdle which Mary dropped in her ascent to Heaven, and which is still treasured within its chapel in Prato Cathedral, was then at hand ; and Vasari's account is that the painter, having fallen violently in love with Lucrezia, found means to take her from the nuns on a certain day when she went forth to do honour to the Girdle of Our Lady.[1] She escaped to the painter's house, and a son—afterwards the famous painter Filippino—was the result of their union Spinetta now joined her sister in Fra Lippo's home, and a general demoralization seems to have taken place in the convent, three others of the nuns escaping with their lovers. The matter was hushed up, as far as possible, by the ecclesiastical authorities, and eventually all the five wandering sheep, including Lucrezia herself, returned to the conventual fold ; but both she and her sister subsequently rejoined Fra Filippo, and the scandal became so serious that he was denounced by name to the authorities. Threatened in this manner, and fearing a second separation, the Frate then appealed, through the powerful intervention of Cosimo de' Medici, to the Pope, and

[1] Cf. Selwyn Brinton. Op. cit. Part III, Chapter II.

eventually obtained leave (in 1461) from Pius II that both the lovers should be released from their vows, and that Lucrezia should remain with him as his wife.

Fra Filippo's greatest pictorial achievement at Prato is his series of frescoes in her Cathedral. Painted at this very time, in an emotional moment of his life, and when his genius and technical powers were at their fullest, they form a work which in freshness of sentiment and masterly composition, to my judgment, he never surpassed. They occupy the entire choir on both sides of Prato Cathedral, are fairly well preserved (though the lighting is sometimes difficult, and I found the morning the best), and have as their subjects the stories of S. Stephen and S. John the Baptist. In the lower tier, on the left, we see the body of S. Stephen Martyr (his miracles being treated above), with grouped mourners around in contemporary costume. I studied these frescoes very carefully when working on this period of Florentine painting,[1] and noted that Fra Lippo himself is here, in black, at the foot of the bier, with, behind him, Fra Diamante, his assistant here and at Spoleto; while the red-robed figure behind is one of his Medici patrons, Messer Carlo de' Medici. Here, too, I was reminded of Masaccio, and traced the influence of the Carmine frescoes in these "grandly grouped figures, who have ample space to move and breathe."

But in the story of the Baptist, the Frate gets away from this yet controlling influence, to reveal himself in his most idyllic mood. First in his scene of the little S. John bidding farewell to his parents ere he goes into the desert; yet more in the famous painting of the dance of Salomé before Herod. The whole room has been cleared for her dance. Above her hair of gold a thin veil is fastened. She wears sleeves of blue, whence long ribbons ripple out from the

[1] Cf. Selwyn Brinton. Op. cit. Part III, Chapter II.

shoulders, quickening the sense of movement, as in her fluttering robe, girt in at the waist and looped up again over her hips, she whirls across the room in the full swing of her *pas seul*.

No greater contrast—though both were professed monks—to the painter we have just studied could be found than his contemporary, "Brother Joannes Petri di Mugello," better known to us as Fra Angelico, who made his first profession at San Domenico when twenty years of age; and from this Convent on the Fiesolan hillside came the lovely *Coronation of the Virgin*, now in the Louvre Museum, where countless saints and angels wait in attendance on the kneeling Virgin. But at this time, as we have seen (Chap. IV), Cosimo de' Medici, returning in triumph to Florence after his brief exile, had, with Michelozzo as his architect, reconstructed the Convent of San Marco within Florence, building the fine library and restoring the church. The work was finished in 1443, but in 1438 Fra Angelico was already busy on his great altar-piece of the church, in whose predella, as a compliment to his patrons, he treats the story of SS. Cosimo and Damian. Then followed the whole marvellous series of frescoes with which he adorned the cloisters and convent cells of San Marco, and of which I have said elsewhere—"No one can really know Fra Giovanni who has not studied in every detail these wonderful frescoes." These commence with the fresco in the cloister, where Christ appears as a pilgrim to the Dominican monks; and he then takes us later through the whole story of Christ's life, culminating in the great *Crucifixion* of the Chapter House, of which Vasari says, "Fra Giovanni was so greatly beloved for his admirable qualities by Cosimo de' Medici that the latter had no sooner completed the church and convent of San Marco than he caused the good father to paint

the whole story of the *Crucifixion of Jesus Christ* on one of the walls of the Chapter House." In my own study of the subject I inclined to take this great *Crucifixion* first in order of time, and admired there especially those wonderful groups of the spectators of Christ's suffering who stand beneath His Cross, the kneeling S. Dominic, the group beside S. Lawrence on the left of the fresco, and again the group of monks upon the right. "Into these figures," I then said, "the Frate has translated his own emotions. Their feelings are his, when he knelt, his cheeks wet with tears, at the foot of his Saviour's Cross, and we think of Vasari's sympathetic words—'It is affirmed that he would never take pencil in hand until he had first offered a prayer. Never did he paint the Crucified without the tears coming to his eyes, and the Saints that he painted had more manner and likeness of Saints than those of any other painter whatever. Whence in the faces and gestures of his figures is visible his sincere and pure spirit.'"

Then returning to the cloister we find this impression only deepened by the series of paintings which await us. In the cloister S. Peter Martyr with finger on his lips to enjoin silence from empty words: above the staircase as we ascend the *Annunciation*, where Mary, seated, receives with supreme humility the message of the entering Angel; in the passage *S. Dominic before the Crucified*, and in every little cell some subject from Christ's story; in his own cell—a lesson and warning to his humble and adoring spirit—the scene of *Judas' Betrayal*. The whole convent is thus a pictorial record of the Frate's art. We get closer to him here than we can ever hope to do by studying his paintings in the galleries; and it has been a recent idea of the authorities of Florence to establish within the convent a little gallery of the Frate's choicest works—to the

By Fra Angelico] THE CRUCIFIXION, WITH ADORING SAINTS [*Convent of S. Marco, Florence*

loss of the Accademia, which had long given them a home. It would be a mistake, while placing first the devotional aspect of Fra Angelico's art, to believe that he lived entirely untouched by the spirit of his age; for he was undoubtedly influenced—consciously or unconsciously—by the past and present art of Florence. I have shown how he derived from Orcagna, and more directly from the great religious painter, Don Lorenzo Monaco, how he was influenced to some extent by the art movement which was all around him in Florence; and this may be traced in his paintings in the Vatican, whither he had been summoned by the great Humanist, Pope Nicholas V, to fill with frescoes the delightful little chapel which still bears that Pontiff's name. But his art was apart from the main currents of his age. It was the utterance—through the then accepted themes of Christian art—of his mystic spirit, the outpourings of his pure and stainless soul. "It is clear," says Symonds, "that we must look, not to Fra Angelico, but to Masaccio, for the progressive forces that were carrying art forward to complete accomplishment. Yet the charm of Masaccio is as nothing in comparison with that which holds us spellbound before the sacred and impassioned rêveries of the Fiesolan monk. . . . His world is a strange one—a world not of hills and fields and flowers and men of flesh and blood, but one where the people are embodied ecstacies, the colours tints from evening clouds or apocalyptic jewels, the scenery a flood of light or a background of illuminated gold. His mystic gardens, where the ransomed souls embrace . . . are such as were never trodden by the foot of man in any paradise of earth." [1]

Such an art as this could never, without loss, have

[1] Cf. J. A. Symonds, "The Renaissance in Italy." Chapter V, "The Fine Arts."

found successors or passed into a school; but Fra Giovanni seems to have influenced directly Alessio Baldovinetti, while Benozzo Gozzoli had worked with him, as assistant, in his uncompleted Orvietan frescoes. But Benozzo felt too strongly the fascination of this actual living world to remain confined within this exquisite, but limited, monastic outlook. From Orvieto he had found his way to Montefalco, the little Umbrian city where his frescoes still remain; then, returning to Florence, he found a commission awaiting him from the Medici to decorate the walls of the chapel in the Palace in Via Larga. At Florence—we are told—a scarcity of artists had become perceptible after 1475. Andrea del Castagno and Pesellino were gone; Fra Lippo, frightened by his creditors or the plague, had retired to Prato; and the place was thus open for this great Medici commission in which, in his *Journey of the Magi*, Benozzo must have had a subject after his own heart.

For here, as in a religious procession or pageant, showing the visit of the Eastern kings to Bethlehem, he paints for us his new patrons, with their cavalcade of mounted followers or running footmen, coming down the winding hillside, in all the fresh glory of Tuscan springtime, to where the Virgin above the Altar bent over her Holy Babe. Beautiful, almost indescribably beautiful, as is the whole setting, the portraits are here of especial importance to our subject. For on these walls Benozzo gives us three generations of these Medici merchant princes, who were then ruling Florence; and, more than this, he at least suggests, in his treatment of this procession, the work which the Medici had done for Florence within the last thirty years. Therefore, as the third Magian King, the Patriarch of Constantinople rides forth from a group beneath a stone pine; while in the second King we see

THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI KINGS
(WITH PORTRAITS OF THE MEDICI)

By Benozzo Gozzoli - *[Chapel of the Medici Palace*

the finely chiselled features of the Greek Emperor, John Palæologus, both these portraits referring to the Council of Florence arranged by Cosimo de' Medici in 1439, of which I have already spoken in Chapter V. In front of all rides Lorenzo de' Medici himself, mounted on a white horse and still quite a youth, with long curling hair ; he is dressed in rich tunic bordered with fur, and is attended by spearmen and grooms, and behind him in the same panel are a whole group of the earlier Medici. Piero, this painter's immediate patron, wearing a red cap and mounted on a white horse, has to his right Cosimo de' Medici on a richly harnessed mule ; and further to the right of Cosimo, with a black page holding a bow between them, appears that Giuliano de' Medici, brother of Lorenzo, whose tragic death I described in the last chapter. The line of portrait heads behind these I take as belonging to Casa Medici ; and above them appears the painter himself, with the legend *Opus Benotii* round his red cap. Most beautiful of all the groups of adoring angels on either side of the altar, kneeling or standing in adoration, " waving rain-bowed coloured wings above fair celestial faces " : no less so the wonderful landscape, with its cypresses and palm trees, which frames the whole lovely creation.

Benozzo never excelled his work in this chapel of the Medici Palace, and Milanesi says very justly—" In this fresco Gozzoli is more chastened (*castigato*) and more accurate than is his wont, without being on that account less copious in his inventive faculty, to which the subject by its nature lends itself very effectively." He was to paint his Medici patrons yet again, but later in life, in his great commission of the Pisan Campo Santo. Here they appear as present at the building of the unfinished Tower of Babel ; but painted, as it were, more intimately as a

family group. Old Cosimo appears with his son, Piero, and his grandsons, Lorenzo and Giuliano, here still young, in cloak, jacket and hose. These young members of the family appearing to be under the charge of the scholar standing near them.[1] Masons are just swinging the great marble cornices into position, and we feel here as if we were assisting at the building of one of Cosimo's convents or palatial villas. In the tier above this the painter treats again the *Adoration of the Magi*, but comparing this with the Medici Chapel we feel that he is scarcely on the same level of imagination.

Here we touch already Lorenzo de' Medici, and come now to his influence, direct or indirect, upon the art of his time; and in this connection I shall speak first of that famous fresco in the Church of S. Trinità at Florence, which shows him, at this later period of his life, beside some members of the Sassetti family. The painter of these frescoes, Domenico Ghirlandajo, has already come before us in this chapter as the early master of Michelangelo, and was at this time at the head of his profession in Florence. A typical creation of his genius is this Sassetti Chapel in S. Trinità, with its frescoes of the story of S. Francis of Assisi. Here, in the scene of the confirmation of the Franciscan Order by Pope Honorious, Lorenzo is introduced to the left of the seated Pope, standing beside Francesco Sassetti and other members of that family. The heads in this fine contemporary group are full of character; and that of the Magnificent himself, seen in profile, with his strongly marked and, if ugly, yet most interesting features, is perhaps the best likeness we possess of him, and far more direct and convincing than

[1] Lorenzo's first teacher was Gentile d'Urbino: but in 1457 Piero placed Cristoforo Landino in charge of his two sons' education.

THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI KINGS
(WITH PORTRAIT OF LORENZO DE MEDICI)

By Benozzo Gozzoli] [*Chapel of the Medici Palace Florence*

that painted later by Vasari. The altar-piece of this chapel was Ghirlandajo's beautiful *Adoration of the Shepherds*, and the whole little chapel is a perfect example of his art. "There are certain monuments" (I have written) "of the Renaissance spirit—such as the Stanze of Raffaello, the Brancacci Chapel, the Sala del Cambio, which are each in their kind representative of a moment of art creation.[1] I would claim a place beside these for Domenico's chapels of S. Fina at San Gimignano and of S. Trinità at Florence—not for their size or grandeur, but for their perfect and finished beauty." But I come now to the Master's paintings of the choir of S. Maria Novella, which he had covered with a series of frescoes of first importance, both for their artistic merit, and for the contemporary portraits which he had here again freely introduced.

This was his next commission after that of S. Trinità; and here he was called upon to replace the ruined paintings of the great Orcagna. The chapel was under the patronage of the Ricci family, but Giovanni Tornabuoni had obtained their permission to let the decoration be completed at his expense; and the artist, as was not unusual in such works, introduced the portraits of the Donor and his wife into the lower fresco beside the window. We have seen already that Giovanni Tornabuoni, Lorenzo's uncle on the side of his mother, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, had held the position of Manager of the Medici bank at Rome; and his family, who have given their name to the principal street of Florence, were intimately connected by marriage and business relations with Casa Medici. The painter has here freely introduced their portraits into the fresco where the angel is appearing to Zacharias; for behind the angel the group of upright figures—in that dignified cos-

[1] Selwyn Brinton, "The Medici at Florence." Chapter II.

tume of the Florentine citizens, with hooded cap and long robe—are the Donor, Giovanni Tornabuoni, his brother Leonardo and two friends, while the group facing them on the other side are taken from the families of the Tornabuoni and Tornaquinci, and another group behind Giovanni and his friends belong to the same Florentine houses.

But between these two groups, behind the angel of Zacharias' message, and in the foreground of the fresco is another group of four half-figures, who are of special interest to our subject here ; for these are all members of, or connected with, the famous Platonic Academy which I have already mentioned in these pages. Vasari gives us their names and description ; for after mentioning in this fresco " all those of Casa Tornabuoni young and old," he continues as follows : " Beside these, to show that there flourished in that age every kind of merit (*virtù*) and especially in the field of letters, he made in a circle four half-figures, who are talking together in the foreground of the scene ; the which were the greatest men of learning who were to be found in those times in Florence ; and these are as follows. The first is Messer Marsilio Ficino, who wears the dress of a canon ; the second, who has a red mantle and black collar, is Cristoforo Landino, and Demetrio Greco is turning towards him ; and in the midst of these, raising one hand, is Messer Angelo Poliziano ; the which portraits are most living and direct."

We are able here to correct Vasari's useful account of the portraits given in these frescoes of the choir of S. Maria Novella by another and most valuable *memoria*, which was in the keeping of the Tornaquinci family, having been taken down by Vincenzo di Piero Tornaquinci in the year 1561, from the statement of Benedetto

ZACHARIAS AND THE ANGEL
WITH PORTRAITS OF THE HUMANISTS

By Domenico Ghirlandaio [*Strozzi Chapel of S. M. Novella, Florence*

di Luca Landucci. Benedetto, like Luca Landucci,[1] was an apothecary (*speziale*) and had known personally the individuals here painted; and, according to his account, the figure which Vasari describes as Demetrio Greco should be really called that of Gentile de' Becchi, Bishop of Arezzo.

I cannot leave these frescoes without some mention of the female figures introduced, also portraits of Florentine ladies, some of them famous beauties of their time, who appear mostly in the three other frescoes of the *Visitation*, the *Nativity of Mary* (where the architectural setting is of remarkable beauty) and the *Birth of John*. In the latter subject the famous Florentine beauty, Ginevra de' Benci (she appears also in the *Visitation*), comes before us, standing upright, dressed in cloth of gold; and here the walls, in rich intarsia work, frame a relief of Amorini which might have come from Donatello's workshop, while behind, on the stairs, the two women, Mary and Elizabeth, are seen embracing. It is in his fresco of the *Expulsion of Joachim* that the Master has introduced many of the painters of his time—first of all himself, Domenico Ghirlandajo, standing upright with his hand on hip, and beside him his brother David, turning his back to us; while in an elderly man, in the red Florentine head-dress, I have traced a portrait of the painter, Alessio Baldovinetti, and the youthful face with dark hair behind these is that of Bastiano Mainardi,[2] Domenico's brother-in-law, who had come to give a hand in the painting of these frescoes.

[1] Luca Landucci, whose Diary I have often referred to in these pages, tells us that "on January 1st, 1452, I was placed in the *bottega* of Francesco di Francesco, *speziale*, in Mercato Vecchio"; and this Benedetto I take to be his son.

[2] A masterpiece of Mainardi's art (the *Virgin and Child*) has just come to our National Gallery from the collection of my late friend, that generous lover of Italian art, Dr. Ludwig Mond.

What a strong race—we feel in studying these frescoes, which connect themselves with the Medici circle almost as directly as those of S. Trinità—must these Florentines have been of that golden time. Beautiful though the women are in their rich robes—their delicate features, with the hair carefully plaited but left in ringlets at the side, sometimes a little wanting in animation—it is the men who hold us here, these citizens of old Florence, —merchants, such as the grave figure of Giovanni Tornabuoni—scholars, such as Ficino or Politian—or artists, with their clean-shaven, earnest or eager faces, and wearing that dignified costume of the *cinque-cento*, unspoiled as yet by the foreign invasion. Technically these frescoes—admirable in their grouping, perspective, composition, architectural framing and dignified portraiture—place Domenico Ghirlandajo in the front of the art of his time. " No one," writes Symonds, " surpassed him in the use of fresco. He was a consummate master of the science collected by his predecessors. His orderly composition is worthy of all praise: his portraiture is dignified and powerful, his choice of form and treatment of drapery noble. Yet we cannot help noting his deficiency in the finer sense of beauty, the absence of poetic inspiration in his work and his reiteration of calculated effects."

A more complete contrast could scarcely be found than that of another Medicean painter, whose name has already come before us in these pages. Sandro Botticelli is just as emotional, as intense in his creative feeling, as Ghirlandajo is level and restrained; while for us here his paintings have a special interest in taking, in several cases, their direct inspiration from the group of poets and scholars in the intimate circle of Casa Medici. We see

VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH ANGELS
(CALLED THE MADONNA OF THE MAGNIFICAT)

By Sandro Botticelli] [*Uffizi Gallery, Florence*

this very markedly in his earlier paintings, when he was working under the patronage of the Medici. One of the most beautiful of his Madonna paintings, that roundel of the *Virgin and Child with Angels*, now in the Uffizi Gallery, which is often called the Madonna of the Magnificat, is stated to have been painted, in 1465, for Piero de' Medici [1]; and it has been suggested that two of the angels, who here kneel before the Virgin holding for her the inkstand and open book, were actually taken from Lorenzo and Giuliano, who would have been then respectively boys of sixteen and twelve.

Vasari tells us that "in Casa Medici for Lorenzo he painted many subjects; and most of all a Pallas over a device of branches which throw out fire, which he painted life-size. . . . In the city, in different houses, he made roundels by his hand, and plenty of naked women (*femmine ignude assai*); of the which there are to-day at Castello, a villa of Duke Cosimo, two paintings representing the one the Birth of Venus and those gentle breezes and winds who bring her to hand with the Loves; and likewise another Venus, whom the Graces crown with flowers denoting the spring; which subjects are seen to be gracefully expressed."

Among the paintings just mentioned I have already spoken of the *Birth of Venus*, which belongs to that happy period of the *Giostre*, that springtime of the lives of the two young Medicean princes; and certainly connects itself with one of the most beautiful picture poems of the "Stanze per la Giostra del Magnifico Giuliano de' Medici," by Angelo Poliziano. The poet has been describing the wonderful doors of the palace of his fancy carved with antique legends, and including among these (verses

[1] V. Colonel G. F. Young. "The Medici." Vol. I, page 175.

xcix–ci) the scene of Aphrodité borne in her shell over the summer seas—

> " Vera la schiuma, e vero il mar direste,
> Il nicchio ver, vero il soffiar de'venti.
> La Dea negli occhi folgorar vedreste,
> E 'l ciel riderne attorni, e gli elementi ;
> L'Ore premer l'arena in bianche veste,
> L'aura increspar li crin distesi e lenti :
> Non una, non diversa esser lor faccia ;
> Come par che a sorelle ben confaccia."

It is impossible to study the beautiful picture conveyed in this verse, and in those immediately preceding and following, without thinking at the same time of Botticelli's no less beautiful treatment of the theme : for with him too the naked goddess, with golden hair and dreaming eyes, is seen wafted by the entwined Zephyrs over the crisping waves, whom Flora awaits on the shore, with her flower-embroidered mantle, beside the laurel tree which is perhaps, as in the poem, an illusion to Lorenzo. Yet again Botticelli seems to have turned to the Medicean poet for his subject in the painting (now in our National Gallery) of Mars asleep in the lap of Venus, who looks out, wide awake and somewhat sad, over her sleeping lover, while behind them the most delightful little Loves are playing with the war-god's discarded armour. But in this treatment he has scarcely followed or improved on the poem, which describes her lover as looking into Venus' eyes and receiving her kisses.

> " Pascendo gli occhi pur della sua faccia.
> Di rose sopra lor pioveva un nembo
> Per rinnovargli all'amorosa traccia :
> Ma Vener dava a lui con voglie pronte
> Mille baci negli occhi e nella fronte."

The *Primavera*, one of Sandro's most delightful picture poems, seems, on the other hand, to have been suggested

THE SLEEPING MARS AND VENUS

By Sandro Botticelli] *National Gallery, London*

by a passage in the great poem on Nature of Lucretius [1]; but is treated with that quaint and delightful imagery, which forms a part of this Master's individual charm. Here again Venus appears as the central figure, attended by the dancing Graces—an exquisite group—while Zephyrus and Flora suggest the advent of spring, and Love, winged and blinded, plies his shaft among the throng. The beautiful Simonetta—" of such charm that all men praised and no women blamed her "—is said to have been the model taken for Venus in both paintings; while Giuliano may come before us here in the figure of Mercury, with his eager young face framed in masses of dark hair, and wearing a crimson mantle.

I have already described the important painting, now in the Uffizi Gallery, of the *Adoration of the Magi*, a direct commission from his Medicean patrons, in which Botticelli had introduced the portraits of Cosimo, Piero, Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici; and have mentioned that he had been commissioned by the Signory, after the failure of the Pazzi conspiracy, to paint the terrible scene of the conspirators being hung from the windows of the Palace. But there is another painting which is of special interest to us as showing his continued connection with the Medici, this being the beautiful *Pallas and Centaur*, which in my own time in Florence was recovered through the initiative of an English resident, Mr. Spence, from a forgotten corner of the Pitti Palace. And this painting not only seems to connect itself directly with that included by Vasari, in the passage I have quoted, among the works done for Lorenzo; but also to directly commemorate, in the form of pictorial allegory, this latter's triumphant return to Florence after his visit to Naples. For here we see the beautiful young goddess, with the olive, symbol

[1] V. Lucretius, " De Rerum Natura." Book V, verse 737.

of peace, entwined about her brow and embroidered on her robe, subduing by her mere touch and presence the brute force of the twin-natured animal beside her. Suggesting obviously the victory of mind over material things, the painting may yet, at the same time, allude to the triumph of Lorenzo's statesmanship, wisdom and courage over the brutal forces opposed to him of sedition, armed conspiracy and war ; and the details of the treatment, the *palle* decoratively introduced, the background of the sea where a vessel lies quietly at anchor, all seem to bear out this interpretation.

PALLAS AND CENTAUR

By Sandro Botticelli [*Pitti Palace, Florence*

CHAPTER IX

LORENZO AND THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE

WE have traced already in these pages (Chap. II) something of the work which Humanistic scholarship had accomplished, in bringing back to Italy, in this Florence of the fifteenth century and under the Medici merchant princes, those immortal creations of the literature of the ancients which are still an inspiration to those who appreciate high thought and finished beauty of style. If they had done this alone these Medici rulers of Florence would have an eternal claim on our gratitude. But they did far more than this for the literature of their country, which, since the days of Petrarch and Boccaccio, had been neglected by the scholars as unworthy of their serious attention. (Already Piero de' Medici had directed attention to the revival of Italian poetry, and Alberti appreciated its wonderful possibilities; but Lorenzo went far beyond this appreciation.

In spite of the Humanists, of their insistence on the special culture of classic literature, and of the general use of Latin in all writings of serious import, so that anything in the vulgar tongue seemed to be a matter for apology, Lorenzo wrote in defence of the Italian language, placing it on a level with the classics, giving their full due to Dante and Boccaccio, and setting the love poems of Petrarch beside Ovid, Catullus and Propertius. Far more than this, again, this versatile and extraordinary man was

himself a poet of no mean order, and by example, as well as precept, restored Italian poetry to that high place which it has never since really lost. I shall come later to his love poems, his " Canzoni," Sonnets and " Ballate " ; but shall perhaps approach these best by first speaking of two poets who shared in his intimacy, and both probably inspired him, and were by him inspired and attracted.

The Romantic poetry of Italy, like the " Commedia del Arte," came out of the national genius of her people, derived from two main sources, the Carolingian and Arthurian legends—in both cases the legend of the great mythical kings who had fought against heathen invasion. That of King Arthur was entwined with the individual stories of the Knights of his Round Table, and the romance of Lancelot, of Guinevere and Elaine : that of the great King Charlemagne with his famous Paladins, Orlando, Ruggiero, Astolfo, and with the tragic issue of the great battle among the mountains in the valley of Roncesvalle. To the nobles in Italy the Arthurian legend, with its vivid picture of feudal manners and its enthralling love interest, was especially attractive : but to the people themselves the Carolingian epic, the figures of the great Christian King and his Paladins, and, above all, Orlando, the heroic Count, overwhelmed at last through treason in the *dolorosa valle*, the pass of Roncesvalle, was of supreme attraction, and formed the groundwork of the " Chansons de Geste " to which they listened in the market-places, handed down from age to age by the " Cantori di Piazza." That the characters of this legend never existed in real life, or, if they did exist, were entirely different, was nothing to them : they became impressed on the popular imagination, and Luigi Pulci only expresses in his verse that intense sentiment of the people for their hero when, in the last canto but one of his great poem, he

engraves on the tomb of the dead Paladin of Charlemagne the words, "One God, one Roland, and one Rome."[1]

Luigi Pulci, one of a family of poets, had the fortune to live within that Medicean circle at Florence which I have touched on at the beginning of my last chapter; and I have already alluded to his *stanze*, entitled, "La Giostra del Magnifico Lorenzo de' Medici." But his masterpiece is the "Morgante Maggiore," composed, it is said, at the suggestion of Madonna Lucrezia—the mother of Lorenzo de' Medici, and herself a votary of the Muses—from the material of the Carolingian legend as presented in Turpin's chronicle, and sung or recited (if we are to believe Bernardo Tasso) by the author at the table of Lorenzo himself. Following the spirit of the Italian religious plays or *rappresentazioni*, Pulci commences each canto with a pious invocation[2]; though much that follows is by no means religious, and his satire and mocking tongue makes jest of all things, human and divine, "passing by rapid transitions from grave to gay, from pathos to cynicism, from theological speculations to ribaldry."

The scene of "Morgante" opens with the Court of King Charlemagne (of whom the poet tells us that Leonardo Aretino had said he needed only a worthy chronicler to be a man divine) and his Paladins, among whom the greatest in war and peace was Orlando; and we are at once introduced to the traitor Gano, who was to bring Orlando later to his death in the pass of Roncesvalle,

[1] Luigi Pulci, "Morgante Maggiore."

"E nel sepolcro le lettere scrisse,
E conteneva in latino idioma,
Uno Dio, un Orlando, e una Roma."

[2] E.g. Canto II begins "O giusto, o santo, o eterna Monarca,
O sommo Giove per noi crocefisso." . . .
Canto III „ "O Padre giusto, incomprensibil Dio." . . .
Canto IV „ "Gloria in excelsis Deo, e in terra pace." . . .
and so on throughout.

and here already succeeds in driving him from the Court by his slanderous and evil tongue. Going forth alone from Paris, his heart full of grief and anger, Orlando, in search of adventure in the land of the pagans (Pagania), has come to an Abbey which is held in terror by three giants, who amuse their leisure by throwing large portions of the mountain at the terrified monks and their good Abbot Chiaramonte. Orlando at once decides that this sort of thing must be stopped; and his efforts in this direction are crowned with success. He decapitates one giant, runs his sword through his second brother, and the third, Morgante, he converts into a Christian; and leaves the Abbey and the gratified *frati* with him reduced to perfect discipline.

Thus Morgante—who is only incidentally one of the characters, and dies in the twentieth canto—gives his name to the whole story, which later criticism has shown to be probably derived from two earlier poems. But what Pulci took he made his own, the characters he created have reality and life; and in spite of his sometimes perverse levity, his salt of humorous comment, he rises to tragic intensity in the story of the great battle of Roncesvalle, of the treason of Gano, the heroic death of Roland.

Luigi was a close contemporary of the Ferrarese poet, Matteo Maria Boiardo, the author of "Orlando Innamorato"; so that in Florence and Ferrara about the same time the same popular legend inspired burlesque and epic verse. That he was indebted to Medicean scholarship, and more directly to the poet Angelo Poliziano, is shown by his own acknowledgment in Canto xxv, verse 109:

> "E ne ringrazio il mio car Angelino,
> Sanza il qual molto laboravo in vano.
> Fida scorta m'e stato al mio cammino,
> Onore e gloria di Montepulciano." . . .

as well as less directly in other parts of the poem : while his courteous and gentlemanly demon, Astarotte, discourses so learnedly on points of theology that it was said by Tasso that part of this canto was to be ascribed to Marcilio Ficino.[1] Such derivations may, however, be easily exaggerated. The poet lived in a brilliant and highly intellectual atmosphere in the Medicean circle, and undoubtedly derived from this some part of his inspiration ; but he remains himself throughout his verse, and tells us as much when he exclaims (Canto xxviii, verse 140)

> " Io mi n'andro con la barchetta mia,
> Quanto l'acqua comporta a picciol legno " . . .

and again (verse 138) :

> " E basta a me trovar Tirsi e Dameta
> Ch'io non son buon pastor—non che poeta."

The name of Angelo Poliziano has frequently come before us in these pages, in connection with the story both of Lorenzo himself, as well as that of scholarship within the Medicean circle. But here I have to treat his achievement as a poet, and we shall find that in this field also he claims a first place among the greatest of his time. Born in the little Tuscan city of Montepulciano,[2] famed throughout Italy for producing the King of Wines, next to his own application and splendid natural abilities he owed everything in life to the generous patronage and

[1] V. Symonds, " Italian Literature." Vol. I, Chapter VI. " It is not improbable that Pulci derived some of the ideas from Ficino, but the style is entirely his own. . . . There is nothing whatever to justify the tradition that Poliziano was the real author of the ' Morgante.' Probably he directed Pulci's reading." And the editor of " Morgante," in the " Classici Italiani," explains, with some vehemence, of these attributions—" Anyone who could hold such an opinion can have read neither the ' Morgante,' nor ' Ficino,' nor ' Politian.' " (" Morgante Maggiore." *Notizie critiche.*)

[2] Mons Politianus ; whence he derived his name.

friendship of Lorenzo de' Medici. He says himself—" I was brought up, almost from a boy, in the strictest intimacy with this great man, Lorenzo de' Medici, in his very Palace, in this his most flourishing Republic " ; so that he must evidently have come to Florence quite early in life. He had studied, as he tells us, Greek philosophy under Argyropoulos of Byzantium and Marsilio Ficino, under whom the respective merits of the teaching of Aristotle and Plato—then, as we have seen, a matter of learned dispute—must have been set before him ; and he adds, " I applied myself to either philosophy, but not with sufficient assiduity, for I was both by nature and the tendencies of my age more prone to the poet Homer." [1] His translation of the Iliad of Homer when he was only eighteen was, in fact, an extraordinary achievement, and justified the title of " Homeric poet " (*Poeta Homericus*),[2] by which Ficino generally addressed him. There can be no doubt that his profound study of the great classic poets gave strength and finish to his style, without in any way overpowering his own originality with the weight of scholarship. He could carry this armour of erudition without even seeming to feel its presence ; and this gave him his unique position and importance, in uniting in his own person the preceding age of Humanistic scholarship with the new spirit now finding expression in Italian verse and prose.

At this time the famous " Giostra " of Lorenzo de' Medici enthralled public interest in Florence, and had been celebrated in verse by the poet, Luigi Pulci ; but

[1] V. Roscoe. Op. cit. Notes in Appendix.

[2] Writing to Lorenzo de' Medici, Ficino remarks that "*Nutris domi Homericum illum adolescentem Angelum Politianum, qui Græcam Homeri personam Latinis coloribus exprimat.*"

Pulci there foreshadowed the coming tournament of Giuliano :

> . . . " l'aspettata Giostra
> Ultima gloria di Fiorenza nostra."

It was now the turn of Poliziano to give poetic form to this *torneo* of Lorenzo's younger brother ; and for these " Stanze per la Giostra del Magnifico Giuliano di Piero de' Medici," he is said to have abandoned even his translation of the Iliad, which he never resumed, and which remains " a noble torso, the most splendid extant version of a Greek poem in Latin by a modern hand." If we regret the great task left incomplete, at least we have gained in its place something of unique value and beauty. These *stanze* are indeed not so much a description of the jousting match, with its accompaniment of splendid pageantry, as a series of word pictures, of exquisite cameos or finished reliefs in bronze, wherein the classic past blends with the modern spirit in new forms of poetic beauty. Among these from their very number it is difficult to select, though the verses (Canto xx–xxi) describing the fabled age of gold, and beginning,—

> " In cotal guisa già l'antiche genti
> Si crede esser godute al secol d'oro " :

have been always justly admired. Nor less so those melodious lines where (Canto xliii–xlvii) the loveliest Simonetta, child of April, beloved of Giuliano, enters the scene :

> " Candida è ella; e candida la vesta,
> Ma pur di rose e fior dipinta e d'erba :
> Lo innanellato crin dell'aurea testa
> Scende in la fronte umilmente superba."

Then follow, in a marvellous series of word pictures (as if framed within carven doors, set with gems and intaglios,

of the Royal House of Venus) those scenes of the birth of the Sea-born Goddess—which I have mentioned in describing the Medicean paintings of Botticelli—of the loves of Jupiter and Neptune, of Apollo and Daphne, the pageant of Bacchus and Ariadne, the triumph of Galatea; and lastly the picture of Venus and Mars, to whom winged Cupid brings the message of Giuliano's love and that of Lorenzo himself for the beautiful Lucrezia Donati (Lib. 2, IV). In these *stanze* Poliziano has the sense of beauty of form which belonged to the Italy of his time; but also, though thrown into the form of classic imagery, a very personal and direct appreciation of the beauties of nature, of all the fresh gladness of Tuscan springtime. It has been well said of him that the chief enthusiasms of his century—" for classical literature, for artistic beauty and nature tranquilly enjoyed, were so fused and harmonized within this poet's soul as to produce a style of unmistakable originality and charming ease." And in the octave *stanze* he had a lyrical measure which, in his hands, possesses the most perfect melody of rhythm, and adapts itself with ease to every expression of his emotion. We feel this in a little masterpiece of his Muse which I shall now briefly describe.

The " Orfeo," written (as he tells us himself) within forty-eight hours, when Poliziano was still only eighteen, and destined for the celebrations of the return of Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga to Mantua, may be based on the traditional forms of the *rappresentazioni*, but is itself something unique in Italian literature. It is quite short, numbering in its five acts less than five hundred lines, and we feel that it needs the musical accompaniment, which must have helped and blended with its melodious beauty. We can picture the scene in that brilliant Mantuan Court of the Gonzaghi, when, singing to the viol,

Messer Baccio Ugolino is said to have come forward in the part of Orpheus. "That the melody," writes Symonds, "of this incomparable song is lost must be reckoned a misfortune"; but the play itself, whose complete manuscript, as it came from the pen of the writer, was recovered at Reggio by Padre Ireneo Affò, is a masterpiece of this poet's genius which can stand on its own merits. Poliziano, in his dedication to Messer Canale, tells us that it was composed in two days, amid continual tumults, in the vulgar tongue, in order that it might be better understood by the spectator, and almost as much lacerated as Orpheus himself; but we find nothing of this in the rhythmical beauty of these perfect lines.

Though more, in its development and ending, of a tragedy than a pastoral poem, "L'Orfeo" commences with the story of a shepherd's love. Aristeo, child of Apollo, has fallen a victim to the charms of Euridice, and, after the manner of lovelorn shepherds, insists on describ- the symptoms of his complaint to a sympathetic friend. Needless to say he rejects Mopso's advice in the matter; and his pursuit of Euridice leads to a tragedy, for, in trying to escape him, she is bitten by a deadly snake. Orpheus, in Act III, hears the story of her death; and in Act IV he dares to follow his beloved one to Hades, and beg back her life from the throned and terrible gods, Pluto and Proserpina. His invocation, beginning with the lines:

> "[1] O Regnatori a tutte quelle genti
> Ch'hanno perduto la superna luce";

possesses wonderful beauty of musical diction; it is a lyrical masterpiece, even if the highest note of passion and pathos is hardly reached. But it is perhaps in his final scene of the death of Orpheus (Act V), and in the

frenzied chorus of avenging Mænads that the poet excels himself. The whole drama seems to lead up to this marvellous chorus, which was not improbably shaping already in the poet's mind throughout the play. In this final scene of the tragedy the verse whirls us along, as if in Bacchic frenzy, with the recurring lilt of its refrain :

> " Ciascun segua, O Bacco, te ;
> Bacco, Bacco, oè oè."

In his " Canzoni " and " Ballate," Politian strikes a very different note, more popular, more varied, but here, too, he is as completely at home as in that musical cadence of the *ottava rima.* To find the proper atmosphere and setting of these " Ballate " and " Rispetti " we must imagine ourselves back in the old streets of Florence, beneath her frowning palaces, on some night of May or June. " The professors' chair is forgotten . . . Pulci and Poliziano join hands with girls from the workshop and the attic. Lorenzo and Pico figure in the dance with 'prentice lads and carvers of woodwork or marble. All through the night beneath the stars the music of their lutes is ringing ; and when the dancing stops they gather round some balcony, or hold their own upon the square in matches of improvised melody with the unknown rhymesters of the people." An old copy of Lorenzo's " Canzoni " (dated 1568) gives us just such a scene, and shows the angle of the Medici Palace in Via Larga with girls dancing in a ring, while one with a wreath is kneeling and another presents Lorenzo with a book. To both Lorenzo himself and to his poet friend it must have been a delight thus to throw off the garb of scholarship or cares of State, and mingle with the people in their pleasures. It has been suggested that the purpose which underlay Lorenzo's cultivation of popular poetry was " to amuse the crowd with page-

antry and music, to distract their attention from State concerns, to blunt their political interest and to flatter them by descending to their level" [1]; but there can be no doubt that with these two poets their enjoyment of these scenes was very real, and combining itself with the pleasures of country life and rustic loves was their inspiration in some of the most finished lyrics of all Italian verse.

Poliziano's *canzonetta zingaresca* of "La Brunetta" might stand beside Lorenzo's "La Neneia" as the two most perfect examples of this form of Tuscan art. The rustic maiden who bathes her face and bosom in the clear water of the spring, who wreathes her golden head with a garland of wild flowers; whose breasts are like "fresh roses of May, glorious in the morning," comes to meet us in the poet's song:

"La Brunettina mia
Con l'acqua della fonte
Si lava il di la fronte
E'l seren petto."

In the same vein, with no less charm of feeling, is that "Sestina Irregolare," which begins:

"Vaghe le montanine e pastorelle;
Donde venite si leggiadre e belle?"

and its companion, "Canzone Irregolare," in deliciously broken metre, which paints to us the shepherdess coming down in the early morning from the mountains, while she sings to her flock, and the little lambs and the kids with the goats dance around her:

"E qualche volta canta una canzona
Che le pecore balla; e gli agnelletti,
E gli agnelletti fanno scambietti,
Cosi le capre con li capretti;
E tutti fanno a gara O le lor danze."

[1] Symonds, "Italian Literature." Vol. I, Chapter V.

In conclusion, I will only mention here two other ballads, both displaying the love of the poet for the Tuscan countryside, and one of which, beginning :

> " I'mi trovai, Fanciulle, un bel mattino
> Di mezzo maggio in un verde giardino,"

has been contrasted by Symonds, who has translated both, with a similar study of Lorenzo in his " Corinto," while giving the preference for imaginative beauty to that of Politian.[1] The conclusion of both poems is in the advice " pluck the rose therefore, maiden, while 'tis May," or, in the words of Politian :

> " Sicchè, Fanciulle, mentre e piu fiorita
> Cogliam la bella rosa del giardino."

Carducci, no mean judge of verse, has said of this *ballata su le rose*—" Whoever in these verses of the Medici has paused over the eclogue, ' Corinto,' will have remained in doubt as to who was here the imitator, and which the imitated." Both Lorenzo and Politian treat the same themes, though not often so closely, as here ; as, for instance, in the former's " Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne " and the treatment of the same subject by Politian in his " Giostra " (Canto cx–cxii) ; but, where both are to be admired, we can best compare their merits by now approaching the poetic achievement of Lorenzo himself.

We now come, therefore, to Lorenzo de' Medici, the

[1] The reader will find both poems (of Lorenzo and Politian) admirably rendered into English verse in this writer's " Italian Literature," Part I, Chapter V ; yet no rendering can give quite the freshness and charm of the original, and for this reason I have preferred here to give my quotations from the Italian. From this point of view both " La Brunetta mia " and Lorenzo's " Nencia " are absolutely untranslatable.

master spirit of his age in Italy, and himself—as I have said—a poet of no mean order. Appreciating fully the great merits of the classic writers of the past, he yet loved best his own Tuscan idiom, his own fair land of Tuscany, and sought his inspiration from her own poets, and from the country life which we shall find that he enjoyed. First in her poets ; for being a Florentine, bred and born, he went back, naturally and almost of necessity, to the great tradition of her poets in the *trecento*—to Dante, to Guido Cavalcanti and to the sonnets of Petrarch. His *canzoni* and sonnets—his earliest work—are, like those of Dante before him, accompanied and supported by a commentary upon the subject-matter of the verse, in the manner of the "Vita Nuova." But there is a gulf, immense, impassable, between that fiery spirit of the old Tuscan poet, who had trod with Virgil the lowest circles of hell, and this cultured Florentine—scholar, statesman, diplomatist, as well as poet—of a later age ; and it may be questioned whether Lorenzo ever really felt Love in its maddening torture, its ache of longing, its spiritual ecstasy.

A good son, devoted to his parents and above all to his mother, he seems to have accepted without much question (as we gather from his own diary) the wife whom she had chosen for him in Rome ; but now to him—as to any eighteenth-century bard—if he were to write himself as a poet, a mistress of his heart was obligatory, essential to the part ; and under these conditions it was not long before she was found. The occasion was one when all Florence was stirred to grief or pity by the death of the beautiful Simonetta, loved by his brother Giuliano, who, as we have seen, may have been the model for Sandro's Venus of the *Primavera.* It was an emotional moment for all, and woke in Lorenzo his yet slumbering Muse to

find expression in a sonnet, which has been considered as one of his finest efforts.

His career as a poet may be said to date from this moment of inspiration; and very soon the lady of his dreams was to come to him in bodily form. It was in some pleasant Florentine festival that he first met Lucrezia Donati, whose beauty and personal charm in his judgment surpassed even that of the lovely Simonetta; and in his poem "L'innamoramento," he has detailed those beauties, and in the *stanze* of "Selve d'Amore" recorded the golden chain which henceforth was to hold him a prisoner.

> "Dolce e bella catena al collo messo
> Quel lieto dì la delicato mano."

And again:

> "Quando tessuta fu questa catena
> L'aria la terra il cielo lieto concorse;
> L'aria non fu giammai tanta serena,
> Ne il sol giammai si bella luce porse,
> Di fronde giovanetti e di fiore piena
> La terra lieta. . . ."

To this period of his literary life belong the sonnets, the *canzoni* and "Selve d'Amore," in which he analyzes his own emotions as well as the charms of Lucrezia; while in the "Selve" he gives a poetic description of the golden age which has been justly praised, and may be compared with that of the same theme by Poliziano:

> "Nella pianta esce il fior la foglia il pomo
> Nel tempo o sito l'ordine confonde,
> In ogni loco la natura prome
> Ogni animal in terra, in aria, in onda."

In his description of the return of spring *col dolce tempo*, of the glad flocks led by the shepherd up the high pastures,

the little lambs running by his side, another side of the poet within Lorenzo finds expression—in his delight in that life in the country in Tuscany which we shall find in his country home at Poggio a Cajano. "The central emotion of Lorenzo's verse," it has been said, "is scarcely love, but delight in the country, the Florentine's enjoyment in the Villa, with its woods and rivulets, the pines upon the hillsides, the song birds and the pleasures of the chase"; and this feeling finds delightful utterance in two of his longer poems, "L'Ambra" and "La Caccia col Falcone."

"L'Ambra"—as we shall see—was the name of his Villa near Cajano; for the destruction of his careful work there by the torrent is here figured poetically in the lovely nymph, who is pursued by the river god, but saved in her distress by the goddess Diana, who transforms her votary "like a figure sketched out but not finished in the hard stone." The influence of the classic poets on Lorenzo de' Medici is evident in "L'Ambra," whose story seems obviously suggested by Ovid's tale (Metamorphoseon V) of Arethusa, the nymph of Diana pursued by the fierce river Alpheus, and saved in her need by the Delian goddess. But Lorenzo infuses the scene with his own feeling, giving us delightful touches of his personal observation of Tuscan country life in the rough weather of winter, when "cold Orion with his blade menaces Phœbus if he dares to show us his fair face," or when the cranes calling to each other mark the heavens with their patterned flight:

> "Stridendo in ciel e gru veggonsi a lunge
> L'aere stampar di varie, e belle forme."

We get the same personal touch in the "Caccia col Falcone," that "record of a Tuscan hawking party

written to amuse Lorenzo's guests, which was never meant to be discussed by critics after the lapse of four centuries." Among these guests here is included Luigi Pulci, but he is missing at the early morning start :

> " Luigi Pulci ov'e, che non si sente ?
> E gli se n'ando dianzi in quel boschetto;
> Che qualche fantasia ha per la mente,
> Vorra fantasticar forse un sonetto " ;

and the whole scene is painted with quick strong strokes which bring to us the music of the hounds, the merriment and bustle in the clean morning air. Contrasted with Politian we find in these poems of Lorenzo less of that wonderful rhythmic melody of the " Stanze " and " L'Orfeo," but a strain more vigorous, and a sharpness of touch which is by no means unpleasing. " Beside the two great poets of his time," says Carducci, " Luigi Pulci and Angelo Poliziano, he will not appear, to one who studies him closely, as much inferior, and certainly he will appear original. Less loose and free than Pulci, less correct and elegant than Poliziano, bristling with rough edges and sharp transitions, Lorenzo, with something of a note of sadness in his writing, with his excessive love for description and a certain metaphysical subtlety of his own, is a forerunner of our modern age."

Some of the qualities here suggested may be traced in " La Nencia da Barberino," a lyric of Tuscan country life in which he surpassed himself ; which caught the popular favour at once, and found many imitators—among them Pulci in his " Beca da Dicomano "—but none who could come near its detailed beauties. The rustic lover, Vallera, here describes the charms of his comely sweetheart in a series of brilliant pictures, drawn with quick, sure touch, painting the warm and lovely

creature to the very life ; and finds when he goes to market at Empoli, Prato, Colle or Poggibonsi that the best goods for him are still in Barberino :

" Più bel mercato che nel mondo sia,
E'a Barberin dov'è la Nencia mia.
Non vidi mai la più pulita testa,
Nè si lucente, nè si ben quadrata ;
Ella'ha due occhi che pare una festa
Quando ella gl'alza ; e che ella ti guata.
Et in quel mezzo ell'è come una rosa
Nel mondo non fu mai si bella cosa."

Sometimes, like Poliziano in his " Ballate," Lorenzo, too, will give advice to his lady friends, such as—in his " Sette Allegrezze d'Amore," or again the " Confessione " —might not always meet with the approval of a stern moralist ; or again he would turn his versatile Muse to the " Canzoni al Ballo " and Carnival songs, among which the " Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne " has come down to us as undoubtedly his own. The poet Il Lasca, who himself had contributed to their number, collected in the sixteenth century these Carnival songs, with, among them, this wonderful " Masque of Bacchus ; " and in the dedication of his work to Don Francesco de' Medici has recorded that Lorenzo himself was the inventor of this manner of celebrating the feast of Carnovale. In these *trionfi*, as the more sumptuous and important processions were called, allegorical cars took part, richly decorated ; and each had its own band of attendants, who accompanied their car dancing and singing—special songs, from three up to fifteen voices, being composed for them for the occasion. Their subjects were very varied, including Masques of Scholars, Furies, Penitents, Hermits, Nuns escaped from the convent, Nymphs in love, Mountebanks, Muleteers and others. Lorenzo took a personal interest in these Masques, and himself—as in the " Masque of

Bacchus" and others—composed the songs, and probably supervised or approved the decorations. It was their wont—as Lasca tells us—"to go forth after dinner, and often they lasted until three or four hours into the night, with a multitude of masked men on horseback following, richly dressed, exceeding sometimes three hundred in number, and as many on foot with torches, which made the night as brilliant as day. . . . You could not see," he adds, "or tell of anything more pleasant or more delightful."

Though Carnovale has long since lost its special character in Florence, at Rome its tradition remained even to our own times. That many-sided genius in art, Gian Lorenzo Bernini, in his own day, under Urban VIII, had added to its merriment by his comedies, which in those years formed a feature of the Roman Carnovale; and I am myself (*eheu fugaces anni!*) old enough to remember, as a very young and very enthusiastic student, the last occasion when the Barberi, the loose horses, ran their wild race down the Corso from the Popolo to the Palazzo Venezia. All Rome of every class, from the highest to the lowest—not merely a few idlers from the hotels, or the riff-raff of the people—was gathered then, masked or unmasked, in the narrow thoroughfare beneath that ribbon of blue sky, for one mad week of merriment—to watch the cars, to join in the contests of flowers, of confetti or *moccoli*, or to escort King Carnival to his final burning; and the reaction was so intense, when the *cenere* came, that frequently there was some tragedy of suicide.

Or again later, looking out from my window on a summer night in Florence, I have watched the revellers coming back along Lung' Arno from the woods and fields or *osterie* without, singing some old refrain with a haunting

chorus—such as Lorenzo might have penned—in praise of the joy of life and springtime ; and, putting these memories together, I could almost imagine myself back among those wonderful serenades in old-time Florence. The Masquers are out (the whisper has gone abroad) this very night ; leaning from our palace window faintly in the distance we hear the throbbing music come nearer—and yet more near. It is the chorus of the Triumph of Bacchus and his Love ; it is Lorenzo himself who to-night will lead the revel. " Beautiful maidens, young men in rich clothes on prancing steeds, showers of lilies and violets, triumphal arches of spring flowers and ribbons, torches flaring to the sallow evening sky—we can see the whole procession as it winds across the Ponte Vecchio, emerges into the great square, and slowly gains the open space beneath the dome of Brunelleschi and the tower of Giotto. The air rings with the music as they come, bass and tenor and shrill treble mingling with the sound of lute and cymbal. The people hush their cheers to listen." It is the lovely " Masque of Bacchus and Ariadne," with golden Midas and Silenus " old and drunken, merry, nodding," and their train of fair nymphs and satyrs, passing us in the pageant of this night of love. There comes to us through the darkness, lit by the flare of torches, the sound of voices and laughter and the tramp of many feet : then a sudden silence—as the voices break into the refrain :

" Quant' è bella giovinezza;
Che si fugge tuttavia ;
Chi vuol' esser lieto sia;
Di doman non ci è certezza."

The voices cease again as the Masque moves on ; " a corner of the street is turned ; while soaring still above

the hubbub of the town we hear at intervals that musical refrain."

And yet this same man, who in his *canzoni a ballo* and Carnival songs can give as his message the pleasure of the moment, the licence of the senses :

> " Fair is youth and void of sorrow
> But it hourly flies away ;
> Youths and maids enjoy to-day,
> Naught you know about to-morrow." [1]

who could, in his " Loves of Venus and Mars," put into the lovely lips of the goddess that voluptuous cry of passion :

> " Vien, ch'io t'invito nuda in mezzo il letto,
> Non indugiar, ch'el tempo passa, e vola,
> Coperto m'ho di fior vermigli il petto.
> Vienne Marte, vien via, vien ch'io son sola ;
> Togliete e lumi, el mio mai non lo spengo."

or in the " Confessione " express to his lady friends only the regret for many lost opportunities :

> " Donne, et fanciulle, io mi fo conscienzia
> D'ogni mio fallo, e vo' far penitenzia.
> Io mi confesso ad voi primieramente,
> Ch'io sono stato al piacer negligente " :
> . . . . .
> Che, per ir drieto a parole di frati,
> Molti dolci piaceri ho già lasciati :
> Di questo ancora i'mi fo conscienza."

—this very man could write sonnets of such spiritual feeling as his " Segui Anima Divina," or pen, in his later years, the sacred play of " SS. Giovanni e Paolo," or, earlier, the verses of his " Lauds," with what we must believe to be no less emotional sincerity. There must have been deep in his nature a strongly mystic element—

[1] V. Symonds. Op. cit. Chapter VI, where the whole poem of the " Masque of Bacchus and Ariadne " is admirably rendered in English verse.

perhaps from the influence of his mother, the poetess Lucrezia, whom he always adored,—a craving which found utterance in these poems, and in those lines to his own heart (*al suo cuore*), which strike a deeper note of penitential ecstasy :

" O maligno e duro core
Fonte d'ogni mal concetto
Che non scoppi in mezzo 'l petto;
Che non scoppi di dolore.
. . . .
Liquefatta come cera
O cuore mio tristo e maligno.
. . . .
O cuore mio da Jesu impara,
La sua croce ancor tu prendi;
E sopra essa ti sospendi—
Non muor mai che con lui muori."

" The poet of the affections, of art and of artifice "—it is thus that Carducci has called him—" lyric and descriptive, elegiac and satirist, philosopher and at one with the people, a born follower of the Tuscan Muse yet in full sympathy with the revival of Greek and Latin, sceptical and yet contemplative, Christian yet epicurean " ; where —I may ask—and how shall we ever really grasp this Proteus of art and life ? The historian may analyse his conduct and policy ; the literary critic may try to assign him his place among the Italian poets, to adjust nicely his merits beside those of Pulci and Politian ; the moralist probe his motives, and approve them or condemn ; but all the time the real man seems to escape us, to puzzle the historian, to elude the critic—and to be laughing all the while at them and us with that kindly but enigmatical elusive smile which seems to haunt his every portrait. Ere we leave him here, let us turn to yet another side of this multiform character, which may throw some further light upon the inner life of his soul and intellect.

The name of Gemistos Plethon, and his message to Italian thought, has already come before us in these pages (Chap. V). It was he who had given the first impulse to the revival of Plato and Platonic thought. "It goes back," writes his modern biographer, Fritz Schultze, "to no other than Gemistos Plethon. The ground was prepared indeed by such scholars as Barlaam —whose scholar Francesco Petrarca loved Plato as much as he turned aside from Aristotle—and as Manuel Chrysoloras, who came to Italy in 1400, and was the teacher of Hugo Benci. Then at last came Plethon himself, in 1438. His personal discourses, by which Cosimo de' Medici had been carried away, gave the occasion for the founding of that Florentine Academy, so rich in blessing for the whole of Humanistic culture; his little essay on the differences between Plato and Aristotle had opened that literary battle between the Platonists and Aristotelians, in which Cardinal Bessarion was such a doughty champion on Plato's side." [1]

Forgotten through the dark ages of mediæval Europe, Plato came again to claim his own in this message of the Greek scholar of Florence to the Medici. Through the ages his divine spirit seems to reach out, to call to his lovers. In my own experience of life I have met with some remarkable instances of this [2]; and here in Florence he reappeared to the best thought of the time—even to that apparently material intellect of Cosimo—as a new

[1] Cf. Fritz Schultze, "Geschichte der Philosophie der Renaissance."

[2] I can remember at Rome how an Italian child, at school in the Convent of the Trinità di Monte, had suddenly discovered Socrates, and came to me full of interest and enthusiasm for anything I could tell her about him; and yet again a young English teacher in our primary schools who begged my help, my advice and books, in getting any way nearer to the thought of Plato. Finding him myself, when committed at Cambridge to other schools, I spent ten delightful days after my Finals in studying, most of all, the Phædo and Symposium.

LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT

By Giorgio Vasari] [*Tribuna of the Uffizi Gallery, Florence*

and overpowering inspiration. We have seen that Cosimo, under his influence, had dedicated Marsilio Ficino to the study of Plato's teaching; and Ficino himself, the hierophant of this new revelation, has recorded this fact in his translation of Plotinus. "The great Cosimo, Father of his Country by decree of the Senate, in that time when the Council was held at Florence under Eugenius IV between the Greeks and Latins, frequently heard the Greek philosopher Gemistos, whose other name (*cognomen*) was Plethon, like another Plato discoursing on the Platonic mysteries (*quasi Platonem alterum de mysteriis Platonicis disputantem*); and so inspired was he by his fervent eloquence that forthwith he conceived in the depths of his mind that Academy, which so happily has now come to birth."

Thus it would be a mistake, to my mind, to regard Gemistos as merely one of the Greek scholars who brought back their ancient philosophy and literature to Europe. He was more than this; and very clearly regarded himself as the prophet of a new and universal religion. This point is sufficiently proved by the very remarkable statement of Georgios Trapezuntius, the opponent of Plato against Cardinal Bessarion—a fact which makes his evidence even more valuable. "I have heard him" (Plethon) "at Florence asserting that the whole world within a few years would receive one and the same religion, with one spirit, one mind, one preaching (*unam eandem religionem, uno animo, una mente, una prædicatione*). When I asked him whether this would be that of Christ or Mahomet? Neither, he said, but not differing in the relationship between them. . . . I have ascertained also from some Greeks who escaped hither from the Peloponesus that he himself had openly said, about three years before his death, that not many years after his

death both Mahomet and Christ would fall, and the perfect truth would stream into every shore of this globe (*non multis annis post mortem suam et Machumetum et Christum lapsum iri, et veram in omnes orbis oras veritatem perfulsuram*)."

This prophetic utterance of Plethon was not to be fulfilled as he had anticipated ; but in a lesser and more limited degree it found a fulfilment in the Platonic Academy of Florence, which, under Lorenzo's fostering care, and with Marsilio Ficino as hierophant, became a very real influence upon contemporary thought. Even the battle over the respective merits of Plato and Aristotle had the advantage that it drew the attention of the public, as well as scholars, to the study of both these philosophers. " Pico della Mirandola saw in Aristotle an enemy of Christian thought : he turns to Platonism as the means of escape from Averrhoes, and other no less damnable errors, back to Christianity. And he is not alone in this opinion, but belongs to a great confederacy, to a widespread circle of Platonists, which had already its centre in the flourishing Platonic Academy at Florence. At their head stood Marsilio Ficino, to whom the doctrines of Plato (*die Platonische Lehre*) were as true as those of Christianity with which they are quite in agreement. And this doctrine, this worship of Plato (*Platoncult*) had captured even thinkers like Paracelsus, Cardenius, Telesius, Campanella, and Giordano Bruno, whose first inclinations had been to the study of the natural sciences." [1]

It is worth our while at this point to glance at the principles which lie beneath this message of the teaching of Plethon. He holds firmly to the divinity in man, to his communion and union with God. " Each of us first

[1] See F. Schultze. Op. cit.

and foremost is a work of God, not something distant from Him, but belonging to Him and allied to His nature (*ημων ἕκαστος γεγονε πρωτον μέν Θεου τι εργον ου πάνυ αλλότριον, ἀλλά δή οἰκεῖον τε και συγγενές*); and as man in his soul comes into union with the whole of things, so does he attain to his noblest enjoyment, and reach to what is best and strongest. But it is through the worship of God that he really attains to this best and strongest [1] (*αυτοις τοις κρειττοσι γένεσιν*)."

And as the soul of man is divine in its nature, so too is it immortal. "The soul within him," says Plethon, "is not created in birth, and is as eternal as the All itself. Therefore it pre-exists; as there is life after death, so there is life before life. . . . We cannot ourselves remember it, because in the earthly life of our earlier childhood, through the force of forgetfulness and the darkness of this mortal life, we remain blind. But the divinest portion of our soul, the *νοῦς*, gives us premonitions of our heavenly ancestry, and gives also secure proofs of the divinity of our soul and its immortality."

But God Himself is surely self-existent, unmoved and unmovable (*ἀκίνητος*), self-sufficing (*ἀυτάρκης*), above the flux of things and without needs (*ἀνεπιδεής*); while man remains in the flow of change, and subject to the vicissitudes of circumstance. Only to the extent in which he participates in these divine attributes can he reach to happiness. Mutable and mortal in his nature he craves for permanence: swept along (as old Heraclitus had said) in the ceaseless stream, of which he is himself a part, he turns to the unchangeable, the eternal and real,—to God. Hence his need of a religion which will satisfy these

[1] "What," exclaims Schultze, "is this best and strongest (*hoheren und arten*) save the different steps of the gods by which men journey upwards to Zeus."

spiritual cravings, underlying his deepest nature; and Plato, great and inspiring though he is, goes back to earlier efforts of the human mind to meet this craving—to the Mysteries, to the teaching of Pythagoras in Hellenized Italy or of Zoroaster in the East, that ancestral home of all religions.

The seed sown by Plethon became developed and matured by Ficino and his circle; but in their study they bring, not Plato alone, but his Alexandrian followers, Plotinus and Proclus—they seek for a common ground in these thinkers with the great tradition of the Christian Church; and something of what we have just seen, in studying Plethon, upon the nature of God and man, seems also to be behind their thought. "The common characteristic of neo-Platonism in its different forms is based on the underlying motive. Man would be completely (*ganz und gar*) freed from the world, and attain to God. But God must, on the one hand, be far from the world, as transcendental as thought can conceive him; on the other hand there must be a connection, a bond of union (*vermittelende verbindung*) between God and the world, so that man can at the same time attain to God. Thence is understood the need of an uniting element, a mediator (*mittler*); and this uniting element is found in the World of Ideas as thought of by Plato, and in the '*κόσμος νοητός*' of Plotinus." [1] But at once here there comes into our mind the Messianic message—the Mediator, the Divine Word (*ὁ λόγος*) "who was in the beginning and was with God (*ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*) and was God, by whom all things were made, who was Life, and the Life was the light of men."

Gemistos Plethon, *ce grand paien*, dwelling on the classic soil of Sparta, had sought to bring back, though

[1] Cf. F. Schultze. Op. cit.

somewhat changed in form, the old gods of Hellas—Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Apollo, Athena—into his new and universal religion; it was this pagan element in his theology which had put Gennadios on his scent, and brought forth the anathemas of that Byzantine Patriarch. But Marsilio Ficino—that pure and lofty soul, mystic by training and by temperament (*d'indole melancolica, mystica, avida di sopranaturale*), most pure in his own life and his view of love, and himself in orders in the Church [1]—turned with his whole soul to the hope of union between the Christian Church and that message of Plato's thought, which formed the subject-matter of the meetings of the Platonic Academy within the Medici Villas of Fiesole or Careggi. What gatherings those must have been! What inspired moments, when, as Hallam has written of Lorenzo, "in a villa overhanging the towers of Florence, . . . with Ficino, Landino and Politian at his side, he delighted his hours of leisure with the beautiful visions of Platonic philosophy, for which the summer stillness of an Italian sky appears the most congenial accompaniment."

Let us dwell upon the scene in our fancy. It is perhaps that noble loggia of his Careggi Villa where the supper has been set to-night. Among the guests, besides Marsilio and Messer Angelo, are Cristoforo Landino, author of the Camaldolese discussions in which Lorenzo and Giuliano both had their part, Pico della Mirandola, the beautiful young prince who had given his life and genius to mystic philosophy, "tall" (said Politian) "and finely moulded, while from his face something of divinity shone

[1] At the age of forty, "not without reflection and mature resolve," Ficino had taken orders in the Church, and faithfully fulfilled his duties.

forth " [1]; perhaps, too, that universal genius of his age, Leo Battista Alberti, Cavalcante, or Carlo Marsuppini, or the poet, Luigi Pulci, beside young Buonarroti—and Lorenzo himself, the wonderful host, the centre and inspiration of the gathering. The subject for discussion this night is the " Banquet "—the " Symposium " of Plato. The lamp is burning in the niche before his bust; and as the stars climb up into the dome of an Italian night, and the cool night wind brings the fragrance of roses from the gardens—the thought of all becomes uplifted to their great teacher's vision of the highest Beauty and Love. " The soul" (it is Ficino who is speaking) " does not grasp intellectually, but *remembers* the divine virtues it had enjoyed in that happy pre-existence which had been spent in the bosom of God; and towards this recollection those natural things impel it which here below have an imprint of that divine creative mind. . . . Love is only unworthy of its aim when it desires the fair body for itself, and not for this higher ideal which it awakens in us." The others give their own interpretation, criticism, or comment. " Then, when the strain of thought, unsphering Plato from his skies, begins to weary, Pulci breaks the silence with a brand new canto of Morgante, or a singing boy is bidden to tune his mandoline to Messer Angelo's last made ' Ballata.' "

That Marsilio Ficino was sincere in his dream of

[1] It was Pico who had written " Philosophy seeks the truth, theology finds it, religion possesses it." These words occur in his letter to the Venetian, Aldus Manutius. The aim of Pico in his profound studies was to harmonize the Christian and Classic thought, but he died before his great work was completed. In Landino's " Disputationes " the subject of the discussion is the relative advantage of the contemplative and practical life. Alberti, who is present with Ficino, gives his praise to the contemplative; Lorenzo himself takes the side of the practical. Michelangelo Buonarroti, when still young, was taken by Lorenzo into his house, " as if one of his own children," and lived there in the intimacy of this wonderful group of poets and scholars.

union of Christianity with philosophic thought there can be no doubt. To the thinkers of his time, and to the honest priests and Churchmen he turns, in a noble and impassioned appeal. " Oh, men ! who are inhabiters of the heavenly city (*cœlestis patriæ cives*), and ye too whose feet are on this earth, let us join together, I here beseech of you, to free philosophy, God's high and sacred gift to man, if we can so do, from this indifference to the religious life ; and we can do it, if our will is but set aright (*possumus autem, si volumus*). But no less let us give our whole strength to free holy religion from the detestable condition of contented ignorance (*ab execrabili inscitia*). In this sense I exhort you all, and I pray especially those who are men of learning (*philosophos*) and no less the priests."

His message passed away unheard, crushed down, drowned in the flood of bloodshed, in the track of foreign armies, in the strangle-hold on Italian thought of the Spanish Inquisition. For two centuries Europe was the victim of wars, unexampled in their horrors, made in many cases in the names of conflicting religions. The gap between Christianity and scientific thought remains yet an open wound in our spiritual and intellectual life. To have attempted to heal this wound, with the help of the highest message of the past, was at least a splendid dream —the dream of the Renaissance.

CHAPTER X

THE FALL OF CASA MEDICI

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI, in the ninth chapter (*de Principato Civili*) of "The Prince"—that unique combination of political insight and immoral precept—puts before us the situation "when a leading citizen, not through any wickedness or other intolerable violence, but with the favour of his other fellow-citizens becomes Prince of his country; the which state of things may be called *principato civile*, i.e. a princely government based on the will of the people; nor is it necessary that he should possess all the talents or all good fortune, but rather to get there quickly should own a happy shrewdness." Developing his argument, the writer goes on to show that such power must be attained either by the support of the great (*grandi*) within the State or of the people; and that the people often—"seeing that it cannot successfully resist the great, turns its support to one man, and makes him prince, so as to be defended by his authority."

It is impossible to read these words without thinking of the Medici, and especially of Lorenzo, whose very name is recalled to us in this work by its dedication to his descendant—*ad Magnificum Laurentium Medicem.* The Medici had, as we have seen, from the first, been the friends of the people, even of those who had vainly endeavoured to obtain their place within those narrow electoral limits

of the citizens of Florence ; through all the vicissitudes of their history the people had never forgotten this, and the basis of the power of these three great Merchant Princes—Cosimo, Piero, Lorenzo—was in this sense really popular.

At the same time, after his return from Naples, there can be no doubt that Lorenzo's position at home was immensely strengthened, and that he took advantage of this fact to yet further secure that position. The traditional method of constitutional change was followed by him in a *Parlamento* (April, 1480) and *Balia ;* and this last now entrusted to a new Council of Seventy the executive power, superseding to a great extent the *Accopiatori*, who had hitherto supervised the electoral boxes for admission to the Signory. Within this Council of Seventy were the Eight (*Otto di Pratica*), a committee who dealt with all foreign affairs, and the twelve Procurators of the Commune who controlled home matters. The whole body, composed of the members of the Signory —the Gonfalonieri of the Republic and those of the Companies, the Priors of Liberty and the twelve Buonuomini,—the thirty members of the Council nominated by the Signory and forty others now added, making the Council of Seventy, as well as two hundred and ten members nominated by the former of these, constituted the Great Council, the Consiglio Maggiore ; and this new constitution worked so well that for ten years no change was made save that Lorenzo, for his own reasons, brought back, in 1490, the *Accopiatori*, to control elections to the Signory as before.

He next turned his attention to taxation and finance, which had always been effective and deadly weapons in the hands of these Medici Princes. Lorenzo had not the financial genius of his grandfather Cosimo ; and the

historian Nardi, speaking of this very period, says that he supplied his own excesses out of the public purse. "And so through the happy success of his affairs Lorenzo had come into such greatness and reputation that little less could have been that of an absolute Prince." But while he was certainly lavish in his expenditure, both public and private, we must remember on his side the heavy expenses of the war provoked by Pope Sixtus; and the facts that, without any civil list, State functions and entertainment fell directly upon him, that Florentine trade expanded and taxation decreased during this "golden age" of his later rule, and, lastly, that under these Medici the private finances of the ruling family were inextricably involved with those of the citizens of Florence and of the State itself.

Yet this was only one side of his life; in another side he found relaxation and no less interest. To the Florentine merchant of means and position his Villa without the walls was, as I have already said, the complement of his Palazzo or city house within; and often more than this—more than the means of supplying himself, his family and dependents, with the prime necessities of life, with meat, wine, oil, firewood, fruit, dairy produce and vegetables—his relaxation, his greatest pride and joy, a pride which is even reflected in the present-day possessors of these delightful Tuscan Villas. Especially was this the case with the Medici, from the time of Cosimo onwards; and here they were only enjoying the privileges of their position and means, along with other leading citizens of Florence. But their Villas, which date more directly from Cosimo's time, and were enjoyed and embellished by his grandson, were almost princely in their architecture and surroundings; noteworthy among these were the Villa Medici at Fiesole (which has changed its name with

modern owners) with its wonderful position overlooking Florence, and farther away the Villas of Careggi, Poggio a Cajano, and, most distant of all, Caffagiolo.

The Villa of Careggi is intimately connected with the story of these earlier Medici. It was here, as we have seen (Chap. V), that Piero de' Medici was staying when the conspiracy, led by Luca Pitti, recalled him suddenly to Florence, and when he narrowly escaped, through Lorenzo's watchfulness, capture on the road; and here, too, we shall find it was that Lorenzo breathed his last. This Villa, like that of Caffagiolo, owed its design and construction to Cosimo's favourite architect, who had followed him to Venice and worked for him always. "Among the finest architectural creations of Michelozzo," says Adolfo Venturi, speaking of this Villa of Careggi, "is certainly the graceful Loggia supported by Ionic columns, an airy completion to the palace. The collaborator of Donatello, in this building of classical proportions, of slender and truly Florentine structure, shows himself among the most elect and faithful interpreters of the forms of Filippo Brunelleschi and among the creators of the modern type of Italian Villa." In the noble loggia of this historic Villa of Careggi tradition relates that the Platonic Academy, founded by Cosimo de' Medici, held, under Lorenzo's inspiration, its meetings, while in the summer nights the wonderful gardens threw out their fresh and odorous fragrance.

When he came later to the Villa of Caffagiolo, with its more massive forms and grand flanking towers, Michelozzo had before him a different problem in the distribution of the main portions of the building, though even here he often recalls to us memories of Careggi. It was in this Villa of Caffagiolo that the family of Lorenzo had come, during the anxious time of war, from Pistoia to

spend the winter months; and many of Poliziano's letters to Lorenzo himself, or to his mother, Madonna Lucrezia, are written from here. Poliziano was here, as tutor, in charge of Lorenzo's children, and evidently found the country in mid-winter anything but attractive. "The only news I can send you," he writes to Lucrezia de' Medici, "is that we have here such continual rains that it is impossible to quit the house. . . . Here I stand by the fireside in my long coat and slippers, so that you might take me for the very figure of melancholy; I neither see nor hear, nor does anything give me pleasure, so much am I affected by the thoughts of our calamities. . . . The plague and the war are incessantly in my mind. I lament past misfortunes and anticipate future evils; and I have no longer at my side my dear Madonna Lucrezia to whom I might unbosom my cares."[1]

In the later period of his life Lorenzo de' Medici was much interested in the settling of his family, which consisted of three sons and four daughters—the sons being Piero, who was born in 1471, Giovanni in 1475 and Giuliano in 1478. Of this eldest of his sons, Piero, it has been said that "he was distinguished by a series of misfortunes only too justly merited," some of which will come into our narrative. It seems impossible that Lorenzo, with his appreciation of character, should not in some measure have foreseen these dangers: but he was far too just a man and good father to do otherwise than give his

[1] We must not forget Lorenzo's favourite Villa at Poggio a Cajano. Here was his dairy farm with its fine herd of cows, his brood of great hogs, his mulberry trees for silkworms, his woods full of pheasants and peacocks; here the scene (V. Chapter IX) of his delightful poem, "L'Ambra." He lived here as a country gentleman, and took keen interest in his estate, in the chase and in racing, running his own horses.

eldest son his proper position in the family and State. Yet it is evident that he possessed a very deep affection for, and interest in, his second son, Giovanni, whom he decided to put into the Church. At the age of seven Giovanni was already admitted to Orders, and at eight had been made by the King of France Abbot of Montedolce, and at eleven received the Abbacy of Monte Cassino from King Ferrante, and that of Santa Maria di Miramondo from Duke Lodovico of Milan. But Lorenzo aimed at nothing less than the Cardinal's hat for his son, and a year later he is already pressing Rome in this direction. There was a reason for this haste, as his own health was failing, and in this matter everything depended on his personal influence with Pope Innocent VIII, who, in fact, was only to survive him by three months. Meanwhile Giovanni was sent to study in the University of Pisa ; and both in his studies and general conduct gave excellent hopes for the future. In 1489, when he was barely fourteen, his name was already on the list ; and, as soon as ever the three years of probation were over, he was inducted as a Cardinal at the Badia of Fiesole, in 1492.

The letter which Lorenzo wrote to him a month later, when, as the newest and youngest Cardinal, he was visiting Rome, is perhaps one of the best ever written by a father to his son, and, did space permit, would be worth quoting in detail.[1] " You are now," he wrote, " devoted to God and the Church ; on which account you ought to aim at being a good ecclesiastic, and to show that you prefer the honour and state of the Church and of the

[1] This admirable letter has been translated by Roscoe in his " Life of Lorenzo de' Medici," Chapter VIII, and is well worth reading. It has been called " the swan song of that wise man," for it was written not long before his death.

Apostolic See to every other consideration. Nor, while you keep this in view, will it be difficult for you to favour your family and your native place. On the contrary, you should be the link to bind this city closer to the Church and our family to the city . . . observing, however, that you will always prefer the interests of the Church . . . I well know," he adds, " that as you have now to reside at Rome, that sink of all iniquity, the difficulty of conducting yourself by these admonitions will be increased. . . . You are not only the youngest Cardinal in the college, but the youngest ever raised to that rank; and you ought, therefore, to be the most vigilant and unassuming, . . . Avoid, as you would Scylla or Charybdis, the imputation of hypocrisy; guard against all ostentation; affect not austerity, or even appear too serious. This advice you will in time understand and practise better than I can express it."

Even apart from Giovanni at this time, Lorenzo was much concerned with his family, and marriages within their circle. Piero, like himself, had married a daughter of the Orsini, Alfonsina, thereby drawing yet closer the connection of the Medici with that princely family of Rome. This marriage was soon after followed (1488) with that of Piero's sister, Maddalena, with Francesco Cibò, " nephew " of the Pope, who held the title of Count of Anguillara.[1] The marriage was a concession to Pope Innocent, and served to bring the Medici closer by family ties to that Pontiff; but Lorenzo had now, beside the interests of his son Giovanni, to

[1] Pope Sixtus IV had died on August 12th, 1484; and there had followed a period of peace within Italy. A successor was found in Innocent VIII, of the Cibò family, who from the first inclined to the friendship of Lorenzo. This Pope was quite open about his family: it was said of him that " *primus pontificum filios filiasque palam ostentavit, primus eorum apertas fecit nuptias.*"

further at Rome those of his new son-in-law. His efforts in this case were not so successful, for the latter remarked of his parent that "like the ox he needs the goad"; and this Franceschetto—who seems to have been merely a spendthrift and an intellectual nullity, with little in common with such a man as Lorenzo—had to content himself with the title of Captain-General of the Papal forces, and his lordship of Anguillara.

Of the other daughters one of them, Lucrezia, was married to Jacopo Salviati, of the family of that Archbishop who had met with such a terrible end in the Pazzi conspiracy; and this marriage is to Lorenzo's credit, for it seems to show that he wanted to bury for ever the embers of past hatred. Another of the sisters, Contessina, had married a Ridolfi; and Luigia had been betrothed into the other branch of Casa Medici, but had died before her marriage. There remains to be noticed, among the sons, Giuliano, who was at this time still a child and weak in health. Marrying later Filiberta of Savoy he acquired the French title of Duke of Nemours, and has been immortalized by the genius of Michelangelo among the figures—"no portrait" (I have said elsewhere), "but rather an embodied thought"—of the Medici Chapel.

Lorenzo's wife, Clarice, had died on July 30th, 1488, while he was absent from Florence at the warm baths of Filetta—where he had gone for his gout and arthritic pains—and there is no doubt that this loss was a severe shock and deeply felt by him. He had already, some years earlier, lost his mother, Lucrezia, to whom he was always devoted, and more recently his daughter, Luigia; and with regard to his wife's death, referring also to these accumulated losses, he wrote that the limit was past and that he could find no comfort for his deep sorrow. This

is not to say that Lorenzo's relations with his wife had been those of perfect sympathy. There can be no question of his entire devotion to his mother, Lucrezia, to whom he was always the *suavissimus filius ;* that, with her help, this marriage with Clarice had been arranged for him (as all the Medici marriages really were) from the family point of view as a political advancement, in spite of a romantic and poetical attachment elsewhere ; and that, as he himself noted in his Diary, his Orsini wife " was given " to him. We cannot help feeling that it might have been better, from every point of view, if he had, like his father, married into some family of these princely merchants of Florence. This Orsini alliance was, without doubt, a " step-up," politically and socially ; but it brought a strain into the Medici blood which came out very fatally in the next generation. As a father we have seen that Lorenzo's whole conduct was admirable. He was just, affectionate and made real friends and playmates of his children ; but having accepted this marriage, with its consequent duties to his family, there can be little doubt that he sought, and found, his pleasures outside. The evidence of such chroniclers as Guicciardini —who evidently was well informed about the gossip [1] to which he refers—is fully borne out by Lorenzo's view of life, as expressed in such poems as " Confessione " and some of the *canzoni* and sonnets. " How shall we elude,"

[1] Cf. Symonds, " Italian Literature," Note on Chapter VI. *"Cosa pazza a considerare che uno di tanta grandezza, riputazione a prudenza, di età di anni quaranta, fussi si preso di una dama non bella e già piena di anni."* Guicciardini adds also of Lorenzo, *"Fu libidinoso, e tutto venereo e constante negli amori suoi, che duravano parecchi anni."* On the other hand Roscoe points out very justly that " whatever may be thought of the conduct or sentiment of Lorenzo on this head it does not appear he left any offspring of illicit love "—which among Italian rulers of that time may be considered almost exceptional.

says Roscoe, by no means a severe critic, " the inference which arises from the following lines ?

> " Teco l'avessi il ciel donna congiunto
> In matrimonio . . ."

or from these which are still more explicit :

> " Se tu pur dinanzi, ed io fui in tempo avanti,
> Dal laccio conjugal legato intorno ? "

Married to a somewhat prosaic and unimaginative companion (if we are to judge from Bertoldo's portrait medal) his fancy roved elsewhere for its emotional stimulus in those warm summer nights of moonlit Florence, or amid the blossoming glories of Tuscan springtime.

Perhaps it was the knowledge of this, and of his intimate friendship with the poet Poliziano, which had led Clarice to resent the presence of this latter in her home as tutor and teacher of her children. But we shall find that in this case—as probably in others—Lorenzo had at once respected her wishes ; nor did he ever let his private pleasures interfere with his conduct of the State, or his devotion to the intellectual life. " When my mind is disturbed," he wrote to Ficino, " with the tumults of public business, how could I possibly support such contentions unless I found my relaxation in learning." [1]

At this time a character appears upon the scene who was destined to exert a tremendous influence upon the future of Florence—though only a part of his career enters our present story. Fra Girolamo Savonarola was born at Ferrara in 1452, and had entered the religious life in the preaching Order of S. Dominic, at Bologna, in April of 1475. There is no doubt that this step had been

[1] Cf. G. F. Young. Op. cit. Chapter IX.

the result of a deep inner struggle and tremendous conviction; that from the first the evils of the time had impressed themselves profoundly on his mind. At this very moment of his life he had written to his father—"All things are full of impiety and evil, of usury and robbery, of blasphemy and crime, of hypocrisy and falsehoods. Here virtues are made vicious, and vice takes virtue's place. Shall I say more? There is none that doeth good (*non est qui faciat bonum*)—no, not one." He had first seen Florence in 1481, as a humble and unknown monk, a guest of that Convent of S. Marco which we have seen so splendidly endowed by the Medici; he came back there from Brescia, in 1488, as a political force, and the greatest preacher in Italy. Such were the crowds attracted by his sermons in S. Marco that in 1490 he was obliged to move to the Duomo of Florence. Lorenzo was probably glad at first to have a preacher of such fame within his city, even if he had not been actually instrumental in recalling him to Florence; but when Fra Girolamo began to introduce politics into his discourses, and even to assume the position of a prophet, these feelings may have very soon altered, and he certainly gave his approval to the rival preacher at this time in Florence, the Augustinian Fra Mariano.

It had been a usual compliment for the Priors-elect of this Convent of S. Marco, which had owed so much to the Medici, to pay a visit on election to their patrons. Savonarola had, no doubt intentionally, omitted this courtesy; and Lorenzo, noticing it, remarked with a smile—"Here is a stranger come to my house who will not deign to visit me." The antagonism of the two men was already apparent. They represented entirely different views of life and thought; they were inevitably, essentially antagonistic. To the monk within S. Marco

FRA GIROLAMO SAVONAROLA
(AS S. PETER THE MARTYR)

[*R. Galleria, Antica e Moderna, Florence*

" this art and external beauty of life and passionate love of learning in the Florence of Lorenzo the Magnificent meant nothing. . . . He turns, very deliberately, his back on this cultured circle of Landino, Poliziano, Pico della Mirandola, Leo Battista Alberti and Ficino himself, who lived in the intimacy of the Magnificent Lorenzo ; and where the scholar Marsilio would include all the learning of his time within his scheme of " Christian Learning " the preacher looks entirely to spiritual regeneration from within." [1] Beginning with scholastic exposition, as the spirit seized him he became inspired, prophetic, the very mouthpiece of God. Within those great spaces of the Duomo of Florence that terrible voice resounded, warning men of evils to come ; and Pico della Mirandola tells us that this voice, echoing through the awed silence of the vast throng, was like the clap of doom—that a cold shiver ran through him as he listened.

These tremendous sermons were not purely emotional, not only marvellous rhetoric ; they were really prophetic, in the sense that every word he then uttered was to be literally and terribly fulfilled. But if we come to analyse them, apart from the wonderful personality of the preacher, we can easily trace two sources of their effect, which have already come under our notice in these pages —the one being the great peril to Italy at this time of foreign invasion, the other the low standard of morality, which has been shown in the preceding chapters, by records of murder and every kind of cruelty and vice. It is impossible to study Italian history in this period without connecting such a condition of things with the example set by the Church. In one of his earliest *novelle* Boccaccio gives the story of two friends, a Jew and a Christian, and

[1] V. Selwyn Brinton, " The Renaissance : Its Art and Life," Chapter IV, " Fra Girolamo Savonarola."

of how the former of these, to his friend's astonishment, was converted by a visit to Rome : " If," said Abraham to his friend, " after what I have seen there your religion continually spreads, it is clear to me that it must be more true and holy than any other." For a century after this matters had gone on in a *crescendo* of evil things. Even now the Papacy of Sixtus IV was to be shortly followed by that of the Borgia, Alexander VI ; and Savonarola, who was always a devout son of the Church, but did not hesitate to speak his mind, boldly points to Rome as " a haughty lying harlot " (*una superba meretrice*). For several years before the Great War it had been evident to many thinkers—if not to the general public and the politicians—that a terrible menace was hanging over Europe in the near future. Had any preacher of that time had the insight to see, and the courage to proclaim this, and found then an audience to listen to him he might well later have been called a prophet.[1] But with Savonarola that prophetic message was two-fold—his denunciation was that of the vices of his country, his revelation of the wrath of God to come ; he described the sin, and in the same moment foretold its punishment.

[1] In my " Medici at Florence," published in 1908 (with this menace in my thought), I mentioned two causes as leading directly to the fall of Florence before the invader : " one, the great danger of parties in a State, when that spirit, stimulating in itself, is carried to extreme excess . . . the other, the necessity for the citizens of a free State themselves to participate in their own defence. . . . The Florentines in the later days of the Republic would never do this ; nor were there wanting specious arguments (we hear their echo in this our land and day) that war had become a science, the soldier a highly trained resultant, whom it was better to pay, and to pay well, than to take the busy citizen from his workshop." But if this were true—and it was true—six years before the avalanche of war, what shall we say of the folly, after that terrible experience, of going back to a system which had proved itself admittedly insufficient—of throwing aside in haste the weapon forged with treasure and dear lives, without taking thought to put anything as good in its place ?

Suddenly an event occurred which precipitated the catastrophe foretold by the preacher, and made inevitable the realization of his vision. The gout—which was Lorenzo's inherited and constitutional weakness—had attacked him with extreme violence early in 1492, and his condition rapidly became critical. On the approach of this attack he had removed to his Villa at Careggi, where he could be quiet from the city, but near enough to see his friends ; and it was then that Poliziano had come to him, and has left us a very precious account of his last hours. His visit had been followed by that of Pico della Mirandola—whom Lorenzo had expressed a great wish to see—and of Savonarola, who must assuredly have been sent for ; and in this connection it is as well here to mention a story, which is by no means borne out by Politian's narrative, and which I incline myself to consider a later invention. It is that the monk had found the now dying man suffering from the recollection of his wrong-doings, on three special points ; namely, the terrible punishment of the Pazzi conspirators, the sack of Volterra, and the matter of the Dowry Fund. The story continues that, standing beside him after his confession, Savonarola had said to him : " Three things are required of you : to have a full and lively faith in God's mercy ; to restore what you have unjustly gained ; and to give back her liberty to Florence." And that Lorenzo had assented to the first two demands, but at the third had turned his face to the wall, and had died without absolution.

I do not propose to go deeply into this story here, because it seems to me that even what we have seen in these pages will enable us to judge of its merits. For we have seen that the retribution of the conspirators had been the work of the justly exasperated citizens of Florence ; the sack of Volterra no fault of either Lorenzo or

even of Federigo of Urbino, whose troops got out of hand ; and the matter of the Dowry was a financial arrangement, which was continued even when Savonarola himself was in power.[1] These may have been points of criticism during the later anti-Medicean reaction, when the story probably originated ; for, lastly, to demand that Lorenzo should give back her freedom to the city was to ask of him something which, in his condition, he could not possibly have done, nor yet is likely that he would have done if he could.

Neither Cosimo, Piero nor Lorenzo were really Republican in their sympathies : but if any of them is to be blamed in this matter it is Cosimo, as I have already indicated. Lorenzo lived in a later generation, when Republican institutions were becoming practically impossible in Italy, and with his keen political intelligence he must have been fully aware of this. I might point out the story of Siena in support of this statement, but I need go no further than Florence herself, who, with the death of the last and greatest of the Medici merchant princes, went back to a Republic with results eventually destructive of all good government. Fully believing, as I do, that government for the people and by the people themselves —a *Respublica*, a Commonwealth—is the highest form of political expression, I see clearly, while holding to this as my ideal for the body politic, that even the possibility of such government must ultimately depend upon the citizens themselves, upon their self-restraint, their unselfishness, their intelligence and patriotism. When party spirit gets the upper hand (and what was true of Italian cities is as true of modern nations), when one class seeks to crush down or spoliate another, when the cry of Liberty becomes a catchword to colour despotic

[1] V. G. F. Young. Op. cit. Chapter IX.

oppression, then the decent and stable citizen, who, after all is generally the majority, becomes in time thankful to accept any government which will offer some kind of security for his life, his property and his future. This was certainly the case in the story of the Italian Republics; and these Medici merchant princes had struck their roots far too deep into the life of Florence to be removed from it for ever. Had they remained in a succession of such rulers as those we have here studied, they might have become gradually established as a popular and cultured dynasty, like that of the Este or Gonzaghi; they might even have been—if anything could have been—the salvation of Italy in her evil days which were coming. Instead of this they were to return at last under very different conditions—under the brutal tyrrany of an Alessandro de' Medici, backed up by Spain and justly ended by assassination.

For with the death of Lorenzo the forces which had held Italy together, under his practised guidance, were withdrawn: the former allies began to quarrel among themselves; the distant threat of invasion came nearer, and yet nearer, as a terrible reality; the prophecies of the Dominican monk began to find their fulfilment. The pride and folly of Piero de' Medici—a young Phæthon whose rash and unskilled hands were now trying to drive the horses of the Sun—was the immediate cause of trouble. Invited to Rome on the accession of the new Pope—for Cardinal Borgia had now succeeded to the Papacy as Alexander VI—his personal vanity saw here its opportunity. For two months previous (Sismondi tells us) his house had been full of tailors and embroiderers; all his jewels were on the costumes of his pages; and, wishing to be first, he had declined the wise proposal of Lodovico, Duke of Milan, that the representatives of the

allies should enter Rome together, and the ambassador of Naples be their spokesman to the Pope. Insecure in his own position at Milan, where he held a dukedom which was not his by right, and jealous of Naples, Lodovico suspected in this piece of puerile vanity some deeper motive. He withdrew from the alliance which Lorenzo had kept together with such care and effort, and formed his own treaty with the Borgia Pope and Venice. Even then this ruler of Milan distrusted his new allies, and in his fear of Naples, now severed from his friendship, he took the fatal step of inviting the French King Charles VIII to assert his claim—which had been always in the background—to the throne of Naples.

" When," writes Guicciardini, " in the month of April, in the year 1492, there occurred the death of Lorenzo de' Medici, a death bitter for himself through his age (for he died when he had not yet completed forty-four years) ; bitter for his country, the which, through his reputation and prudence and most active understanding in all things honoured and excellent, had flourished very marvellously in riches and all the ornaments of life, which are wont to be in the company of a long and happy peace ; but a death, yet further, most unfortunate (*incomodissimo*) for the rest of Italy, for whose common security he had constantly laboured, and was, as it were, a bridle on the displeasures and suspicions which frequently arose between Ferdinand and Lodovico Sforza, princes, both of them, ambitious and of almost equal power. When, too, yet another occasion of change for the worse was found, in the death of Pope Innocent to whom Roderigo Borgia had succeeded ; then came to us that year of 1494—that most unhappy year for Italy, and of a truth, the first of our years of misery, since it opened the doors to the numberless and horrible calamities in which

a great part of the world came from different causes to share." [1]

Not alone was this the case in the conduct of the State, but the whole movement of scholarship and that fresh blossoming of Italian poetic genius seemed to wither and fade now that Lorenzo's presence was withdrawn. The poet and scholar Angelo Poliziano did not long survive his generous patron and friend, whose death was to him a blow from which he never really recovered There is a note of deep feeling, of poignant suffering in that beautiful Latin monody which he composed to his dead friend's memory; in which he compares his song to the lament of the dove deprived of her mate, to the song of the swan before his end, to the passionate outpouring of the nightingale's note:

" Quis dabit capiti meo
Aquam ? Quis oculis meis
Fontem lachrymarum dabit ?
Ut nocte fleam,
Ut luce fleam.
Sic turtur viduus solet ;
Sic cygnus moriens solet ;
Sic luscinia conqueri.
Heu miser, miser ;
O dolor, dolor ! "

Pico della Mirandola, the beautiful young scholar, the intimate friend of Lorenzo was to pass away, too, dying as the French armies came within those old gates of Florence. To the Dominican monk, who now came to rule the city, Pico's vast erudition, drawn from the Kabbala and ancient Mystics, was as a vain babbling; an old

[1] Cf. " Istoria d'Italia," di Messer Francesco Guicciardini, gentiluomo fiorentino. Lib. I. The description of the golden age under Lorenzo, which precedes this passage, is, in its way, a piece of artistry —inversely like Boccaccio's introduction of the plague at Florence before his *novelle* of love and romance—to contrast those happy days with the years of war and terror which were to follow.

woman, he said, could have more saving faith than Plato.

With his terrible sermons thundering in their ears, and coming to fulfilment before their very eyes, men could have little thought of other things; and a vague and terrible presentiment of evil came to take possession of their minds. "To the terror of men," says the author I have just quoted,[1] "there went abroad the report of there having appeared in diverse parts of Italy things foreign to the use of nature and of the heavens. In Apulia were seen by many three suns in the midst of heaven, but surrounded with clouds, and with horrible lightnings and thunder. In the territory of Arezzo there had passed, visible to the eye of man for many days, countless men armed and riding mighty horses (*armati sopra grossissimi cavalli*), with a terrible noise and the sound of trumpets and drums. Elsewhere the sacred images and statues had been seen to sweat; so that the minds of the people were filled with terror of what was to come." And always that thundering voice of the preacher was pealing forth its catalogue of coming doom. "Oh, Italy, there cometh to thee trouble upon trouble, evil upon evil—not alone the terror of war, but that of hunger, and yet again the terror of the plague following upon war, and that first in one part of Italy, then in another part. . . . From the East there shall come woe, and from the West there shall come woe—from every side woe upon woe! Then shall cease the visions of the prophets, the prophets of whom ye have made a mock; for the voice of the prophets shall be stilled, and God shall say to them—Let your prophesy alone, for it is now my time to fulfil."

For meanwhile the French armies were moving down the coast, and coming daily nearer to that pleasant land

[1] V. Guicciardini. Op. cit. Lib. I.

of Tuscany—a great feudal host, with Breton archers and Gascon infantry, with the flower of the French chivalry around their King, and eight thousand Swiss and German pikemen. At Asti, King Charles had been met by Lodovico Sforza, with his father-in-law, Ercole d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, and all the Court of Milan ; at Rapallo, on the Ligurian coast, the Swiss and German guards, who were soon followed by the French, had massacred the citizens and even the prisoners in their hands ; and now they had come along the coast to where Sarzana guards the road southward to Florence. Then it was that Piero de' Medici committed the unforgettable act of treachery, of selfishness and folly, which laid open his country to the enemy, and was to lose him Florence for ever. Riding into the French camp at Pontremoli he then and there delivered to their King the keys of Sarzana, Pietrasanta and all the fortresses which guarded Florence from attack on that side—those frontier fortresses which his father had acquired for her with good treasure, and won back again with years of hard fighting—and with them he gave away the two seaports of Florence, Pisa and Livorno.

Guicciardini is here again worth quoting. " Piero de' Medici immediately caused to be handed over to him (King Charles) those fortresses of Serezana, of Pietra Santa and of Serezanelo, and a few days later by his order the same was done with Pisa and Livorno ; and greatly did the Frenchmen marvel that Piero should have so easily consented to matters of such great importance, seeing that the King would doubtless have agreed to much easier conditions." The day following he tells us that Lodovico Sforza arrived in the camp ; and, when Piero had excused himself for not having gone to meet him, because, through Lodovico having missed the road,

it would have been useless for him to come—"True it is," the Duke of Milan had promptly replied, "that one of us has missed his way—but perhaps that one will prove to have been yourself (*vero e che uno di noi ha fallito la strada—ma sarete voi forse quello*)." And Nardi, telling us how all this had been done, "solely by the authority of the said Piero, without waiting for the letters and confirmation of the Signory" (as according to the law should have been done), continues as follows: "These matters when they became known in Florence, to the Signory and to the people, caused universally the greatest alarm and excitement throughout the city (*gran perturbatione alla Città*), each and everyone being bitterly incensed that Piero, without any sort of commission from the Signory, and even without the knowledge of the ambassadors in his company, had the mind to rob his own country of so many lands and strongholds of the greatest importance." [1] An embassy was promptly despatched to the French King of five orators, "among whom was Frate Girolamo Savonarola of Ferrara, of the Convent of S. Marco;" but could get little attention from that "Most Christian" monarch, who was now at Pisa, "seeing that Piero, who had gone to meet him, had already preoccupied his mind."

It was at this time that Piero left Pisa to make his return to Florence. He had certainly come to some sort of understanding with the French King, as to the reward of his act of treachery and selfish folly. On this point Nardi is conclusive. "In the time that Piero de' Medici was staying at Pisa, having come to an understanding with His Majesty . . . he returned to the city (Florence) with the fixed intention of taking the Palace and forcing the Signory to make a *Parlamento*, and while that was

[1] V. "L'Historie della Città di Fiorenze," di M. Jacopo Nardi (1582). Lib. I.

being done to recover the State, not only according to the wonted manner of the ancient government of the Medici (*il modo consueto del' antico governo dei Medici*), but with the firm deliberation to make himself absolute prince of the country, being driven to do this thing chiefly by his wife and by the other Orsini who were his relatives." He had brought Paolo Orsini to help him with his armed followers (*genti d'armi*), and had mounted cross-bow men ready at S. Antonio del Vescovo, near Florence. Now was come for him the moment to act, to show himself in this city where there were already ominous mutters against his name. For good or evil his hour of fate had come. Let us hear the story from the mouth of one who was a witness, and let him tell us how it all befell.

"On the ninth day of November, 1494, it being a Sunday" (wrote Luca Landucci in his Diary), "about the twentieth hour when vespers were sounding, Piero de' Medici wished to go to the Signory in their Palace and to bring with him his armed servants; and when the Signory would not let him enter, save it were himself alone and without arms, he would not go alone and turned back. Then he came back again to the Piazza, and at this same time people began to come into the Piazza, and all in a moment they began to cry within the Palace, '*Popolo e Libertà*' (the 'People and Freedom'), and to ring the great bell *a Parlamento* (for the Parliament), and to cry from the windows, '*Popolo e Libertà*.' And at once there came into the Piazza the *gonfalone* (standard) *del Bue*, and behind came Francesco Valori on horseback with other citizens on horseback, all crying '*Popolo e Libertà*.' He was the first to come on to the Piazza, but on a sudden now, ere an hour had passed, the whole Piazza was alive with all the standards" (i.e. the standards of the Guilds and Companies of Florence), "and all the citizens, and full

of armed men with tremendous cries of '*Popolo e Libertà.*' And although the people did not well understand what it all meant, none the less there were not many citizens who went to the house of Piero de' Medici; the Tornabuoni went there, and some others and armed themselves with many servants, to whom he had given orders, and went forth into the street at his door, crying '*Palle.*' Then Piero mounted his horse to go to the Piazza with his following, and more than once he made a start, and then stopped again. My belief is that he did not find himself accompanied by too many citizens, and also that they must have told him that the Piazza was full of armed citizens. And in this moment, the Cardinal, his brother, started from his house, with many servants and with those citizens who were there, and came into the Corso as far as Orto Sa' Michele, crying '*Popolo e Libertà*' like the others, as showing that he was apart from Piero; but ere he reached the Piazza they showed him the points of their swords, calling out traitor, and would not have him there, so that he turned back, not without peril of his life. . . . And in this time Piero de' Medici saw himself deserted by some who laid down their arms; and one went from this side, and one from that, so that he remained with few beside him. Wherefore the aforesaid Piero took his departure and went towards the Porta S. Gallo, which gate he had caused to be left open by Giuliano, his brother, with many servants within and without. And without he had the Lord Paolo Orsini with his horsemen, waiting armed to come within. The time did not seem to them very favourable; and Piero waited a little, and then decided to go off in God's name (*con Dio*), and Giuliano with him."

Thus Piero de' Medici went out of the gate of Florence —and out of her history for ever. Had he turned back

to the Piazza, that hornet's nest of angry citizens, crying their old watchword of Liberty, he would have surely met his sudden and certain end ; he went forth from that San Gallo gate a beaten man, with the great bell of the Signory Palace still clanging into his ears its ominous message of his doom. His life was to be spent in futile efforts to return to the city, but never again could he come within her walls : that was but the just reward for his treason and folly. The great merchant princes, his predecessors, whom we have studied in these pages, had indeed ruled the Republic, but according to its laws and honoured traditions, " that wonted manner (*consueto modo*) of the ancient rule of the Medici ; " and that rule had for fifty years given to Florence peace and prosperity, and made her the greatest city of Italy. But Piero would have none of this, he would be absolute prince (*principe assoluto*) and despot : he died in exile, and when in the century following the Medici did at length return it was as Dukes of Tuscany, placed there by the Emperor's favour and sufferance.

Cardinal Giovanni had stayed behind him, returning to the Palace in Via Larga. " The poor Cardinal " (continues Landucci) " quite a youth, remained at home, and I myself saw him at the windows on his knees with hands clasped, praying to God. When I saw him I felt quite sorry for him, and came to the conclusion that he was a good youth and of a good disposition ; and seeing that Piero had gone they said he disguised himself as a friar, and he went off in God's name." [1] The Medici had gone,

[1] Cf. Luca Landucci, " Diario Fiorentino." 1494. I have here given his narrative for the wonderful living impression of the scene, which he must certainly in great part have witnessed. Apart from some slight confusion as to the proclamation of the Signory his account seems substantially correct, and is confirmed, with further details, by that of Nardi.

leaving only their name and an empty palace ; and that night there was wild work in Florence, houses put to the sack, and all through the night armed citizens with standards going through the streets to guard their city, and with lighted torches crying aloud, " *Popolo e Libertà.*"

Then eight days later, on the seventeenth day of November, King Charles of France rode into Florence, coming from Empoli through the old San Frediano Gate, with all his French chivalry around him, his Breton bowmen, his plumed German mercenaries and parti-coloured Swiss. He entered the city with great pomp and provision of magnificence. " In signe of victorie armed himself and his horse, with his launce upon his thigh, and immediately began to speak of compositions . . . and demanded openly the emperie of Florence, alleging that according to the order of warre in his Realme of France he had lawfully wonne it, seeing that his entry was armed according to the custom of conquerors (*allegando che per essere entrato a quel modo armato l'aveva legitimamente guadagnato*)." [1]

Then it was that the sack of the Medici Palace took place, which was such an irreparable loss for Florence and to the whole world of culture. " Amid these disasters to Italy," writes Roscoe, " there is none that so forcibly excites the regret of friends of letters as the plundering of the Palace of the Medici, and the dispersing of that invaluable Library." De Comines, who had come to Italy with this French army, places—perhaps unjustly—the blame on the King of France himself. " As soon as His Majesty was informed of the flight of Peter de' Medicis, he fell to rifling the Palace upon pretence that the bank at Lyons was in arrear to him for a considerable sum of

[1] Cf. Guicciardini's " History of Florence," translated by Geffray Fenton, 1578. V. Note below.

money"; and gives details of some of the objects then seized, stating that others followed the King's example, while the mob plundered the furniture.[1] What seems certain, however, is that the French soldiers commenced this looting, but were soon followed by the people of Florence, either from revenge towards the Medici or for simple destruction and thieving. All that wonderful collection, unique in the world, the creation of three generations of the Medici merchant princes, and brought together, not with riches alone, but with knowledge and fine discrimination. "... monuments of Greek and Latin learning" (says Bernardo Ruccellai), "and art, books, statues, engraved stones, jewels, the finest productions of nature and art ... those treasures which had been productive of such delight to all who saw them, and esteemed the most attractive feature of Florence, became all at once a prey to the spoiler, to the insatiable grasping of the French and the sordid treachery of our own people."[2]

De Comines gives details of some of the plunder—"Several fine agate cups besides an incredible number of seals admirably well cut, which I have seen, and three thousand medals of gold and silver, weighing nearly forty pounds ... so that his losses in the city that day might be computed at one hundred thousand crowns, if not more, while the Senate got part of his richest jewels and twenty thousand ducats which he had in the bank in the city." The art treasures then stolen were, for the most part, irrevocably lost; but part of the priceless collection

[1] Cf. "The Historical Memoirs of P. de Comines." English version. London, 1817. Book VII, Chapter IX. The bank referred to must have been the Medici bank at Lyons.

[2] V. Bernardo Ruccellai, "De Bello Italico." Quoted by Roscoe in his notes. We think here of that wonderful cornelian, set by Lorenzo Ghiberti (Chapter III), and of how many other lost treasures.

of books and manuscripts were recovered later, through purchase, by Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici from the Convent of S. Marco after the death of Savonarola, who had, however, made presents of many of them to different Cardinals—" in the idea of thus saving himself from excommunication and other ecclesiastical processes." [1]

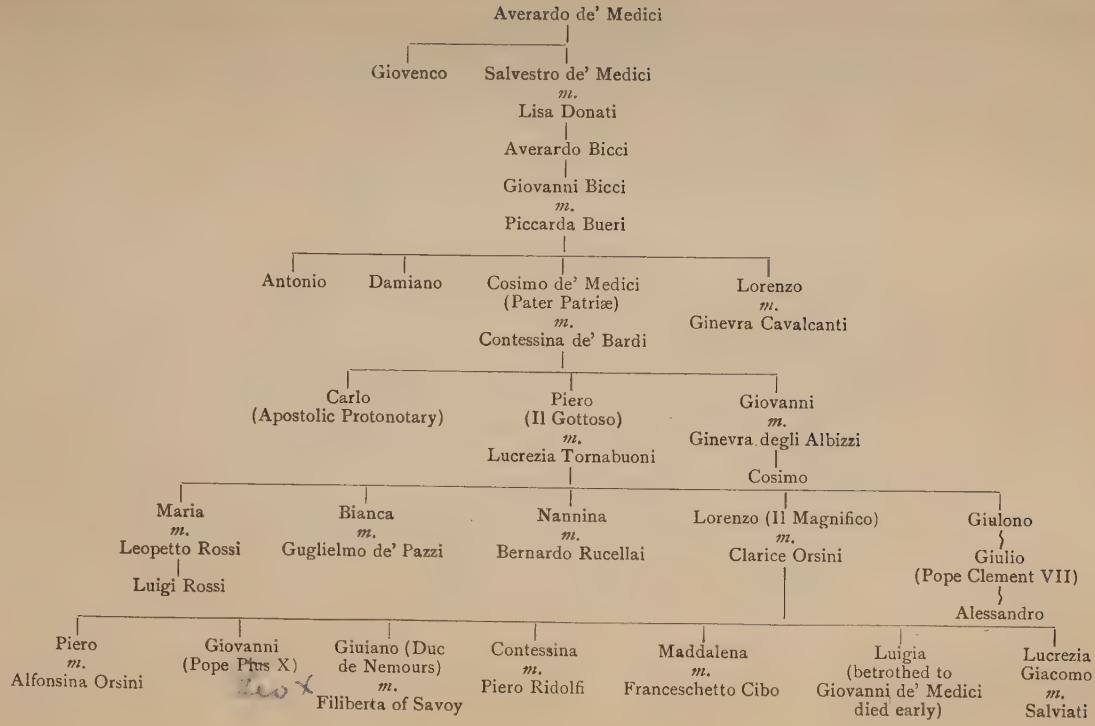
There can be little doubt that Florence ran a terrible risk of having the whole city sacked by the French soldiers at this time; and Landucci, under the date of Friday, November 21st, writes, " that, while the citizens were in great fear and perturbation, all at once it was heard said that the King had promised to his soldiers Florence for plunder, and everyone ran home fast to close all the shops." But the King gave them fair words and only asked for money, a loan of 120,000 florins, 50,000 to be paid down at once; and De Comines tell us that the Signory " paid 50,000 ducats down, and the rest in two short payments afterwards."

But neither so had he conquered their Florence, nor could he hold her. Those old streets of hers contained a hidden menace that he dared not face: he tried vainly to reinstate Piero, then bargained for money (of which he was always badly in need), and left her on his way south—a day's pageant, and a threatening memory. This very account of his entry—which I give from an old English writer [2]—may serve to remind us that, even though those happier days of freedom and culture were now ending in Italy—to be soiled and crushed in the track of invading

[1] V. Roscoe. Note on Chapter X.

[2] In the translation of Guicciardini's " History of Florence " by Geffray Fenton, and dedicated in the preface—written " at my lodging near the Tower of London, January 6th, 1578 . . . to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, our most redoubted, most happie and true soveraigne Ladie Elizabeth." This work, which I have compared with the original, is also of value as shewing the interest taken then in England in the drama of Italian contemporary history.

armies, or stifled in the prisons of the Inquisition—yet the message of art and scholarship which she in those days had given was, like fertilizing pollen, to break forth throughout Europe into new forms of human thought; and that in the north, in those heroic States of Holland and in our own Island, set in the silver sea, the torch of liberty had been caught from the dying hands of those old Italian Republics, to be kept alight through the ages, and carried to new and mighty nations across the western seas.


Averardo de' Medici
Giovenco
Salvestro de' Medici
m.
Lisa Donati
Averardo Bicci
Giovanni Bicci
m.
Piccarda Bueri
Antonio
Damiano
Cosimo de' Medici
(Pater Patriæ)
m.
Contessina de' Bardi
Lorenzo
m.
Ginevra Cavalcanti
Carlo
(Apostolic Protonotary)
Piero
(Il Gottoso)
m.
Lucrezia Tornabuoni
Giovanni
m.
Ginevra degli Albizzi
Cosimo
Maria
m.
Leopetto Rossi
Luigi Rossi
Bianca
m.
Guglielmo de' Pazzi
Nannina
m.
Bernardo Rucellai
Lorenzo (Il Magnifico)
m.
Clarice Orsini
Giulono
Giulio
(Pope Clement VII)
Alessandro
Piero
m.
Alfonsina Orsini
Giovanni
(Pope Pius X)
Giuliano (Duc
de Nemours)
m.
Filiberta of Savoy
Contessina
m.
Piero Ridolfi
Maddalena
m.
Franceschetto Cibo
Luigia
(betrothed to
Giovanni de' Medici
died early)
Lucrezia
Giacomo
m.
Salviati

INDEX

Acciaiuoli, Agnolo, 96, 98, 100, 108
Accolti, Benedetto, 26
Accopiatori, 4
Admonitions, Law of, 5, 6
Albizzi, Rinaldo degli, 11, 12, 15,18, 22, 36, 38
Albizzi, Maso degli, 15
Albizzi, family of, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12
Albizzi, Luca degli, 31
Albergati Niccolo, Cardinal, 38, 39
Alberti, Leo Battista, 45, 57, 60, 200
Alberti, family of, 5, 45
Alfonzo, Duke of Calabria, 101, 102, 141, 150
Anghiari, Balduccio d', 90
Alfonso, King of Aragon, 31, 32
Angelico, Fra, 159–162
Antonio, Battista d', 56
Aragon, Leonora of, 114,125
Aretino, Carlo, *v.* Marsuppini
Argyropoulos, John, 21, 38, 178
Arts, 3
Arte del Cambio, 8
Augustus Cæsar, 15
Aurispa, 30, 31, 38

Balia, 4, 11
Bardi, Contessina de', 8
Bagnone, Stefano da, 129
Baldovinetti, 153
Bardi, Niccolo di Betto, 61
Bartolomeo, Maso di, 46, 62, 75
Baldovinetti, Alessio, 155, 162, 167
Bandini, Bernardo, 129, 131, 135
Bartoluccio, 47, 52
Bembo, Pietro, Cardinal, 25
Benci, Hugo, 194
Bentivoglio, Annibale, 81
Bentivoglio, Giovanni, 96, 101
Benvenuta 32,
Bernini, 62, 109
Bertoldo, 69
Bessarion, Cardinal, 83, 194
Bicci, Giovanni de', *v.* Medici, Giovanni de'
Bicci, Neri de', 151
Bisticci, Vespasiano, 33
Boiardo, Matteo, 176
Borgia, Cardinal, 217
Boccaccio, 28, 30, 173, 213
Botticelli, Sandro, 104, 108, 113, 135, 155, 168–171
Borromeo, Giacomo, 127
Brancacci, 155
Bracciolini *v.* Poggio
Brunelleschi, Filippo, 9, 42–62, 152, 153, 155 205
Bruni Leonardo 26 27 29 31–35, 38, 50, 83, 175
Buonarroti, Michelangelo, 50, 155, 164, 200
Buti, Francesco, 157

Cafaggiolo, 14, 76, 108, 205
Calabria, Duke of, *v.* Alfonzo
Capponi, Neri, 90
Castagno, Andrea del, 152, 155, 162
Careggi, 14, 38, 76, 92, 97, 108, 199, 205, 215
Cavalcanti, Giovanni, 91

Cavalcanti, Guido, 185, 200
Cellini, 43, 52
Cesarini, Cardinal, 83
Chrysoloras, 27, 30, 31, 33, 194
Chrysoloras, Theodora, 27, 35
Christian, King of Denmark, 114
Ciompi, 5, 6
Ciani, Gioacchino, 28
Clement VII, Pope, *v.* Giulio de' Medici
Corsini, Filippo, 114
Colonna, Giovanni, 24
Collegio, 4
Colle, Simone da, 46
Colleoni, Bartolommeo, 18, 68, 96, 100

Davanzati, 79
Delli, Dello, 152
Dissipato, John, 83
Donati, Niccolo, 11
Donati, Lucrezia, 105, 180, 186
Donatello, 10, 11, 43, 46, 53, 77, 151, 155, 205
Doni, Paolo, 49, 152, 153

Este, Borso d', 96, 98
Este, Ercole d', Duke of Ferrara, 100, 114
Este, Beatrice d', 114
Este, Isabella d', 114
Eugenius IV, Pope, 11, 38, 39, 52, 78, 82, 83

Fancelli, Luca, 60
Feltre, Vittorino da, 26
Ferrara, Duke of, *v.* Este
Ferrero, Guglielmo, 15
Ferrante, King of Naples, 114, 138, 144–150
Ficino, Marsilio, 23, 93, 166, 177–201
Filarete, 72
Filelfo, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 35, 36–41
Forli, Melozzo da, 124
Foscari, Francesco (Doge), 19
Galeazzo, Gian, *v.* Visconti
Galeazzo, Giovanni (Sforza), 106
Gattamelata, 68
Ghiberti, Lorenzo, 42, 61, 67, 151
Ghirlandaio, Domenico, 155, 164, 167–169
Giotto, 54, 70
Giovanni, Tommaso di Ser, *v.* Masaccio
Giorgio, Francesco di, 59, 142
Gonzago, Duke of Mantua, 26, 141
Gonzaga, Francesco, Cardinal, 180
Gozzoli, Benozzo, 10, 49, 156, 162–164
Greco, Demetrio, 166
Guadagni, Bernardo, 12
Guarino, 26, 30, 31

Honorius, Pope, 164

Inghirami, 115

Lamberti, Niccolo, 46
Lampugnani, 118–119
Lando, Michele, 6
Landucci, Luca, 13, 167, 223, 228
Landino, Cristoforo, 38, 166, 199, 213
Lasca, Il, 189
Laurana, 59
Leo X, Pope, 89
Lessandro, Piero di, 51
Lippi, Fra Filippo, 10, 133, 153–160
Lippi, Filippino, 155
Lorenzetti, Ambrogio, 53
Louis XI, King of France, 102

Machiavelli, 5, 8, 14, 90, 98, 202

Maffei, 129
Mainardi, Bastiano, 167
Majano, Benedetto da, 43
Malatesta, Sigismondo, 32, 107
Malavolti, 11
Manetti, Gianozzo, 31, 32, 38, 55, 65
Mantua, Duke of, *v.* Gonzaga
Marsigli, Luigi, 28
Marsuppini, Carlo, 26, 29, 31, 34, 35, 36–41, 200
Martin V, Pope, 52
Martini, *v.* Francesco di Giorgio
Masaccio, 152–155, 161
Masolino, *v.* Panicale
Matilda, Countess, 2
Medici, family of, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 16, 35
Medici, Salvestro de', 5, 6
Medici, Giovanni de', 8, 21, 85, 92, 155
Medici, Cosimo de', 7, 8–22, 29–31, 34–99, 194, 195
Medici, Lorenzo de', 8, 11, 25
Medici, Piero de' (Il Gottoso), 10, 15, 16, 64, 92–109
Medici, Lorenzo de' (Il Magnifico), 12, 15, 16, 35, 38, 40, 92–218
Medici, children of the Magnifico, 206–210
Medici, Giulio de', 52, 136
Medici, Giuliano de', 103–137, 163–164
Medici, Lucrezia de', 103, 106, 206, 209
Michele, Bartolo di, 46
Michelozzo, 9, 11, 46, 77, 159, 205
Mirandola, Pico della, 196, 213, 215, 219
Monaco, Don Lorenzo, 161
Montefeltro, Federigo di, Duke of Urbino, 24, 101, 115, 120, 139
Montesecco, 128, 129, 135

Nardi, Bernardo, 111–112
Nencio, 46
Nero, 52
Neroni, Diotisalvi, 96, 98, 111
Niccoli, Niccolo de', 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 41, 89
Nicholas V, Pope, 38, 39, 161

Olgiati Girolamo, 118
Omedeo, 77
Ordinances of Justice, 2, 3
Orlandini, 90
Orcagna, 161, 165
Orsini, Cardinal, 78
Orsini, Clarice, 103, 106, 209
Orsini, Alfonsina, 208
Orsini, Paolo, 223

Palæologus, John, 82
Panicale, Masolino da, 153–155
Parlamento, 4, 10, 11
Parentucelli, Tommaso (Nicholas V), 38, 39
Paul II, Pope, 102
Pazzi, The, 40, 120–136
Petrarch, 24, 28, 173, 185
Perugino, Pietro, 155
Pesellino, 153, 162
Petrucci, Cesare, 111, 132
Piccinino, 18, 79, 89, 144
Pilatus, Leontius, 31
Pisano, Andrea, 46, 48, 70
Pitti, Luca, 60, 92, 95–99, 205
Plethon, Gemistos, 30, 84–88, 194–201
Poggio (Bracciolini), 24, 27, 29, 31, 33, 34–41
Poggio, Jacopo di, 129, 132
Poggio a Cajano, 187
Pollaiuolo, Antonio, 155
Poliziano, Angelo, 25, 38, 102, 149, 166, 169, 176–201, 206, 219
Portigiani, Pagno di Lapo, 62, 76
Popolo, 3, 5
Pulci, Luigi, 103, 174–201

Quercia, Jacopo della, 43, 46, 47

Riario, Girolamo, 124–138
Riario, Pietro, 124

Ricci, The, 5
Robbia, Luca della, 46, 57–77
Rodolfo, Antonio, 131
Rossellino, Bernardo, 26, 43, 70
Rossi, Roberto de, 31
Rosmini, 37
Rovere, Francesco della, *v.* Sixtus IV

Sacchetti, Francèsco, 37
Salutati, Coluccio de, 28, 33, 34
Sarzana, 38, 103, 221
Sarzana, Tommaso di, 22, 39
Salviati, Francesco, 126
Salviati, Jacopo, 209
San Gallo, Giuliano, 142
Sassetti, Francesco, 164
Savonarola, Fra Girolamo, 64, 73, 211
Settignano, Desiderio da, 26, 59, 114
Sforza, Alessandro, 100
Sforza, Bianca, 18, 37
Sforza, Galeazzo, 94, 96, 101, 102, 106, 117–120
Sforza, Francesco, 18, 19, 80, 94
Sforzo Lodovico, Il Moro, 119, 140, 218, 221
Signoria, 10, 11
Simoneta, Cecco, 119, 120
Sixtus IV, Pope, 39, 40, 120, 123–150, 214
Soderini, Niccolo, 96, 98
Soderini, Tommaso, 110, 115, 116, 119
Spinelli, 46
Squarcione, 69
Strozzi, Palla degli, 21, 22, 27, 31, 35, 36, 38

Tasso, 117
Tornabuoni, Giovanni, 94, 98, 165, 166
Tornabuoni, Lucrezia, *v.* Medici, Lucrezia de
Tornaquinci, 166
Trapezuntios, Georgios, 37, 88, 195
Traversari, Ambrogio, 8, 27, 37–41
Trebbio, 14

Uccello, *v.* Paolo Doni
Ugolino, Baccio, 181
Urbino, Palace of, 59
Urbino, Federigo, Duke of, *v.* Montefeltro
Urbino, Gentile d', 164
Uzzano, Niccolo da, 9, 10, 50, 155

Valla, Lorenzo, 31
Varchi, 3
Veii, 43
Veneziano, Domenico, 153
Verona, 69
Verrochio, Andrea, 64, 66, 155
Vespasiano, 29, 38
Villani, 23
Vinci, Leonardo da, 155
Visconti, Filippo Maria, 12, 18, 34, 79
Visconti, Gian Galeazzo, 18, 81

The Mayflower Press, Plymouth.
William Brendon & Son, Ltd.

METHUEN'S
GENERAL LITERATURE

A SELECTION OF

MESSRS. METHUEN'S PUBLICATIONS

This Catalogue contains only a selection of the more important books published by Messrs. Methuen. A complete catalogue of their publications may be obtained on application.

ARMSTRONG (Anthony) ('A. A.' of Punch)

WARRIORS AT EASE
WARRIORS STILL AT EASE
PERCIVAL AND I
PERCIVAL AT PLAY
APPLE AND PERCIVAL
ME AND FRANCES
HOW TO DO IT
Each 3s. 6d. net.

LIVESTOCK IN BARRACKS
Illustrated by E. H. SHEPARD.
6s. net.

TWO LEGS AND FOUR
Illustrated by RENÉ BULL.
5s. net.

YESTERDAILIES. Illustrated. *5s. net.*

BAGENAL (Hope) and WOOD (Alex.)

PLANNING FOR GOOD ACOUSTICS
Illustrated. *£1 2s. 6d. net.*

BAIKIE (James)

EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES IN THE NILE VALLEY. Illustrated. *£1 1s. net.*

BAIN (F. W.)

A DIGIT OF THE MOON
THE DESCENT OF THE SUN
A HEIFER OF THE DAWN
IN THE GREAT GOD'S HAIR
A DRAUGHT OF THE BLUE
AN ESSENCE OF THE DUSK
AN INCARNATION OF THE SNOW
A MINE OF FAULTS
THE ASHES OF A GOD
BUBBLES OF THE FOAM
A SYRUP OF THE BEES
THE LIVERY OF EVE
THE SUBSTANCE OF A DREAM
Each 3s. 6d. net.

AN ECHO OF THE SPHERES
10s. 6d. net.

BALFOUR (Sir Graham)

THE LIFE OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
Twenty-first Edition. *10s. 6d. net.*
Also, *3s. 6d. net.*

BARKER (Ernest)

NATIONAL CHARACTER
10s. 6d. net.

GREEK POLITICAL THEORY
14s. net.

CHURCH, STATE AND STUDY
10s. 6d. net.

BELLOC (Hilaire)

PARIS *8s. 6d. net.*
THE PYRENEES *8s. 6d. net.*
MARIE ANTOINETTE *18s. net.*
A HISTORY OF ENGLAND
In 7 Vols. Vols. I, II, III and IV
Each 15s. net.

ON NOTHING
HILLS AND THE SEA
ON SOMETHING
THIS AND THAT AND THE OTHER
ON
FIRST AND LAST
ON EVERYTHING
ON ANYTHING
EMMANUEL BURDEN
A PICKED COMPANY
Each 3s. 6d. net.

BIRMINGHAM (George A.)
A Wayfarer in Hungary
Illustrated. 8s. 6d. *net.*
Spillikins: Essays 3s. 6d. *net.*
Ships and Sealing-Wax: Essays 3s. 6d. *net.*

BUDGE (Sir E. A. Wallis)
A History of Ethiopia: Nubia and Abyssinia
Illustrated. 2 vols. £3 13s. 6d. *net.*

CHARLTON (Moyra)
Patch: The Story of a Mongrel
Illustrated by G. D. Armour.
5s. *net.*

CHESTERTON (G. K.)
All is Grist
Come to Think of It . . .
Each 6s. *net.*
G.K.C. as M.C. 7s. 6d. *net.*
The Ballad of the White Horse
3s. 6d. *net.*
Also Illustrated by Robert Austin. 12s. 6d. *net.*
Charles Dickens
Generally Speaking
All Things Considered
Tremendous Trifles
Fancies versus Fads
Alarms and Discursions
A Miscellany of Men
The Uses of Diversity
The Outline of Sanity
The Flying Inn
Each 3s. 6d. *net.*
A Gleaming Cohort 2s. 6d. *net.*
Wine, Water and Song
1s. 6d. *net.*

CLUTTON-BROCK (A.)
What is the Kingdom of Heaven?
Essays on Art
Shakespeare's Hamlet
Each 5s. *net.*
More Essays on Books
Essays on Religion
More Essays on Religion
Each 6s. *net.*
Shelley, the Man and the Poet
Illustrated. 7s. 6d. *net.*
Essays on Books
Essays on Literature and Life
Essays on Life *Each* 3s. 6d. *net.*

CRAWLEY (Ernest)
The Mystic Rose. Revised and Enlarged by Theodore Besterman. 2 vols. £1 10s. *net.*
Studies of Savages and Sex
Edited by Theodore Besterman.
10s. 6d. *net.*
Dress, Drinks and Drums.
Edited by Theodore Besterman. 12s. 6d. *net.*

DUGDALE (E. T. S.)
German Diplomatic Documents, 1871–1914
Selected from the Documents published by the German Foreign Office. In 4 vols. Vol. I, 1871–90. Vol. II, 1891–8. Vol. III, 1898–1910. Vol. IV, 1911–1914.
Each £1 1s. *net.*

EDWARDES (Tickner)
The Lore of the Honey-Bee
Illustrated. 7s. 6d. and 3s. 6d. *net.*
Beekeeping for All
Illustrated. 3s. 6d. *net.*
The Bee-Master of Warrilow
Illustrated. 7s. 6d. *net.*
Bee-Keeping Do's and Dont's
2s. 6d. *net.*
Lift-Luck on Southern Roads
5s. *net.*

EINSTEIN (Albert)
Relativity: The Special and General Theory 5s. *net.*
Sidelights on Relativity
3s. 6d. *net.*
The Meaning of Relativity
5s. *net.*
The Brownian Movement
5s. *net.*

EISLER (Robert)
The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist.
Illustrated. *Demy* 8vo. £2 2s. *net.*

FIELD (G. C.)
Moral Theory 6s. *net.*
Plato and His Contemporaries
12s. 6d. *net.*

FINER (H.)
The Theory and Practice of Modern Government. 2 vols.
£2 2s. *net.*

FYLEMAN (Rose)
Fairies and Chimneys
The Fairy Green
The Fairy Flute
Each 2s. *net.*
The Rainbow Cat
Eight Little Plays for Children
Forty Good-night Tales
Fairies and Friends
The Adventure Club
Forty Good-Morning Tales
Seven Little Plays for Children
Twenty Tea-Time Tales
Each 3s. 6d. *net.*

FYLEMAN (Rose)—*continued*
FIFTY-ONE NEW NURSERY RHYMES
Illustrated by DOROTHY BURROUGHES. 6*s. net.*
THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARWHOPPLE
Illustrated by GERTRUDE LINDSAY. 3*s.* 6*d. net.*
THE DOLLS' HOUSE
Illustrated by MARGRET TEMPEST. 5*s. net.*
GAY GO UP
Illustrated by DECIE MERWIN. 5*s. net.*
THE ROSE FYLEMAN FAIRY BOOK
Illustrated by HILDA MILLER. 10*s.* 6*d. net.*
A GARLAND OF ROSE'S
Illustrated by RENÉ BULL. 8*s.* 6*d. net.*

GIBBON (Edward)
THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE
With Notes, Appendixes and Maps, by J. B. BURY. Illustrated. 7 vols. *Demy* 8*vo.* 15*s. net* each volume. Also, unillustrated. *Crown* 8*vo.* 7*s.* 6*d. net* each volume.

GLOVER (T. R.)
VIRGIL
THE CONFLICT OF RELIGIONS IN THE EARLY ROMAN EMPIRE
POETS AND PURITANS
Each 10*s.* 6*d. net.*
FROM PERICLES TO PHILIP
12*s.* 6*d. net.*

GRAHAM (Harry)
THE WORLD WE LAUGH IN
Illustrated by 'FISH'. *Eighth Edition.* 5*s. net.*
STRAINED RELATIONS
Illustrated by H. STUART MENZIES and HENDY. 6*s. net.*
THE WORLD'S WORKERS
Illustrated by 'FOUGASSE'. 5*s. net.*
ADAM'S APPLES
Illustrated by JOHN REYNOLDS. 5*s. net.*

GRAHAME (Kenneth)
THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS
207*th Thousand.* 7*s.* 6*d. net.*
Also illustrated by ERNEST H. SHEPARD. 7*s.* 6*d. net.*
Pocket Edition, unillustrated.
Cloth, 3*s.* 6*d. net.*
Green Morocco, 7*s.* 6*d. net.*
See also **Milne** (A. A.)

HADFIELD (J. A.)
PSYCHOLOGY AND MORALS
Eighth Edition. Crown 8*vo.* 6*s. net.*

HALL (H. R.)
THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF THE NEAR EAST. £1 1*s net.*
THE CIVILIZATION OF GREECE IN THE BRONZE AGE £1 10*s. net.*
A SEASON'S WORK AT UR OF THE CHALDEES. £1 5*s. net.*

HEATON (Rose Henniker)
THE PERFECT HOSTESS
Decorated by A. E. TAYLOR.
7*s.* 6*d. net.* Gift Edition, £1 1*s. net.*
THE PERFECT SCHOOLGIRL
3*s.* 6*d. net.*

HERBERT (A. P.)
HONEYBUBBLE & Co. 3*s.* 6*d. net.*
MISLEADING CASES IN THE COMMON LAW. With an Introduction by LORD HEWART. 5*s. net.*
MORE MISLEADING CASES 5*s. net.*
WISDOM FOR THE WISE
Illustrated by GEORGE MORROW. 5*s. net.*
THE WHEREFORE AND THE WHY
Illustrated by GEORGE MORROW. 3*s.* 6*d. net.*
THE BOMBER GIPSY 3*s.* 6*d. net.*
THE SECRET BATTLE 3*s.* 6*d. net.*
TANTIVY TOWERS 2*s.* 6*d. net.*
DERBY DAY 2*s.* 6*d. net.*
THE HOUSE BY THE RIVER.
3*s.* 6*d. net.*

HOLDSWORTH (Sir W. S.)
A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LAW
Nine Volumes. £1 5*s. net each.*
Index Volume. £1 1*s. net.*

HUDSON (W. H.)
A SHEPHERD'S LIFE
Illustrated. 10*s.* 6*d. net.*
Also unillustrated. 3*s.* 6*d. net.*

HUTTON (Edward)
CITIES OF SICILY
Illustrated. 10*s.* 6*d. net.*
MILAN AND LOMBARDY
THE CITIES OF ROMAGNA AND THE MARCHES
SIENA AND SOUTHERN TUSCANY
NAPLES AND SOUTHERN ITALY
Illustrated. *Each* 8*s.* 6*d. net.*
A WAYFARER IN UNKNOWN TUSCANY
THE CITIES OF SPAIN
THE CITIES OF UMBRIA
COUNTRY WALKS ABOUT FLORENCE
ROME
FLORENCE AND NORTHERN TUSCANY
VENICE AND VENETIA
Illustrated. *Each* 7*s.* 6*d. net.*

HYAMSON (Albert M.)
PALESTINE OLD AND NEW
Illustrated. *7s. 6d. net.*
A HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN ENGLAND
Illustrated. *10s. 6d. net.*

INGE (W. R.), D.D., Dean of St. Paul's
CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM
(The Bampton Lectures of 1899).
Sixth Edition. *7s. 6d. net.*

KIPLING (Rudyard)
BARRACK-ROOM BALLADS
255th Thousand.
THE SEVEN SEAS
186th Thousand.
THE FIVE NATIONS
143rd Thousand.
DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES
117th Thousand.
THE YEARS BETWEEN
95th Thousand.
Four Editions of these famous volumes of poems are now published, viz. :—
Crown 8vo. *Buckram, 7s. 6d. net.*
Fcap. 8vo. *Cloth, 6s. net.*
Leather *7s. 6d. net.*
Service Edition. Two volumes each book. *Square Fcap.* 8vo. *3s. net* each volume.
A KIPLING ANTHOLOGY—VERSE
Sixth Edition.
Leather *7s. 6d. net.*
Cloth *6s. net* and *3s. 6d. net.*
TWENTY POEMS FROM RUDYARD KIPLING
494th Thousand. *1s. net.*
A CHOICE OF SONGS
62nd Thousand. *2s. net.*
SELECTED POEMS *1s. net.*

LAISTNER (M. L. W.)
THOUGHT AND LETTERS IN WESTERN EUROPE (A.D. 500–900). *15s. net.*

LAMB (Charles and Mary)
THE COMPLETE WORKS
Edited by E. V. LUCAS. Six Volumes. With Frontispieces. *6s. net each.*
SELECTED LETTERS
Edited by G. T. CLAPTON. *3s. 6d. net.*
THE CHARLES LAMB DAY BOOK
Compiled by E. V. LUCAS. *6s. net.*

LANKESTER (Sir Ray)
SCIENCE FROM AN EASY CHAIR
SCIENCE FROM AN EASY CHAIR Second Series
DIVERSIONS OF A NATURALIST
GREAT AND SMALL THINGS
Illustrated. *Each 7s. 6d. net.*
SECRETS OF EARTH AND SEA
Illustrated. *8s. 6d. net.*

LINDRUM (Walter)
BILLIARDS. Illustrated. *6s. net.*

LODGE (Sir Oliver)
MAN AND THE UNIVERSE
7s. 6d. net and *3s. 6d. net.*
THE SURVIVAL OF MAN *7s. 6d. net.*
RAYMOND *10s. 6d. net.*
RAYMOND REVISED *6s. net.*
MODERN PROBLEMS *3s. 6d. net.*
REASON AND BELIEF *3s. 6d. net.*
THE SUBSTANCE OF FAITH *2s. net.*
RELATIVITY *1s. net.*
CONVICTION OF SURVIVAL *2s. net.*

LUCAS (E. V.)
THE LIFE OF CHARLES LAMB
2 Vols. *£1 1s. net.*
THE COLVINS AND THEIR FRIENDS *£1 1s. net.*
VERMEER THE MAGICAL *5s. net.*
A WANDERER IN ROME
A WANDERER IN HOLLAND
A WANDERER IN LONDON
LONDON REVISITED (Revised)
A WANDERER IN PARIS
A WANDERER IN FLORENCE
A WANDERER IN VENICE
Each 10s. 6d. net.
A WANDERER AMONG PICTURES *8s. 6d. net.*
E. V. LUCAS'S LONDON *£1 net.*
INTRODUCING LONDON
INTRODUCING PARIS
Each 2s. 6d. net.
THE OPEN ROAD *6s. net.*
Also, illustrated by CLAUDE A. SHEPPERSON, A.R.W.S. *10s. 6d. net.*
Also, India Paper.
Leather, 7s. 6d. net.
THE JOY OF LIFE *6s. net.*
Leather Edition, 7s. 6d. net.
Also, India Paper.
Leather, 7s. 6d. net.
THE GENTLEST ART *3s. 6d. net.*
And THE SECOND POST *3s. 6d. net.*
Also together in one volume. *7s. 6d. net.*

LUCAS (E. V.)—*continued*
FIRESIDE AND SUNSHINE
CHARACTER AND COMEDY
GOOD COMPANY
ONE DAY AND ANOTHER
OLD LAMPS FOR NEW
LOITERER'S HARVEST
LUCK OF THE YEAR
EVENTS AND EMBROIDERIES
A FRONDED ISLE
A ROVER I WOULD BE
GIVING AND RECEIVING
HER INFINITE VARIETY
ENCOUNTERS AND DIVERSIONS
TURNING THINGS OVER
Each 3*s.* 6*d. net*
CLOUD AND SILVER
A BOSWELL OF BAGHDAD
'TWIXT EAGLE AND DOVE
THE PHANTOM JOURNAL
ZIGZAGS IN FRANCE
TRAVELLER'S LUCK
VISIBILITY GOOD *Each* 6*s. net.*
FRENCH LEAVES Illustrated. 5*s. net.*
THE BARBER'S CLOCK
ROVING EAST AND ROVING WEST
Each 5*s. net.*
Mr. Punch's COUNTY SONGS
Illustrated by E. H. SHEPARD.
10*s.* 6*d. net.*
'THE MORE I SEE OF MEN . . .'
OUT OF A CLEAR SKY
IF DOGS COULD WRITE
'. . . AND SUCH SMALL DEER'
Each 3*s.* 6*d. net.*
NO-NOSE AT THE SHOW
Illustrated by PERSIS KIRMSE.
2*s.* 6*d. net.*
THE PEKINESE NATIONAL ANTHEM
Illustrated by PERSIS KIRMSE.
1*s. net.*

See also **Lamb (Charles).**

LYND (Robert)
RAIN, RAIN, GO TO SPAIN
IT'S A FINE WORLD
Each 5*s. net.*
THE GREEN MAN
THE PLEASURES OF IGNORANCE
THE GOLDFISH
THE LITTLE ANGEL
THE BLUE LION
THE PEAL OF BELLS
THE MONEY-BOX
THE ORANGE TREE *Each* 3*s.* 6*d. net.*

MACAULEY (Thurston)
THE FESTIVE BOARD
Decorations by A. E. TAYLOR.
5*s. net.*

McDOUGALL (William)
AN INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY 10*s.* 6*d. net.*
NATIONAL WELFARE AND NATIONAL DECAY 6*s. net.*
AN OUTLINE OF PSYCHOLOGY 10*s.* 6*d. net.*
AN OUTLINE OF ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY 15*s. net.*
BODY AND MIND 12*s.* 6*d. net.*
CHARACTER AND THE CONDUCT OF LIFE 10*s.* 6*d. net.*
MODERN MATERIALISM AND EMERGENT EVOLUTION 7*s.* 6*d. net.*
ETHICS AND SOME MODERN WORLD PROBLEMS 7*s.* 6*d. net.*
A BRIEF OUTLINE OF PSYCHOLOGY: Normal and Abnormal
8*s.* 6*d. net.*

MALLET (Sir C. E.)
A HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. In 3 vols. *Each* £1 1*s. net.*

MAETERLINCK (Maurice)
THE BLUE BIRD 6*s. net.*
Also, illustrated by F. CAYLEY ROBINSON. 10*s.* 6*d. net.*
OUR ETERNITY 6*s. net.*
THE UNKNOWN GUEST 6*s. net.*
POEMS 5*s. net.*
THE WRACK OF THE STORM 6*s. net.*
THE BURGOMASTER OF STILEMONDE 5*s. net.*
THE BETROTHAL 6*s. net.*
MOUNTAIN PATHS 6*s. net.*
THE GREAT SECRET 7*s.* 6*d. net.*
THE CLOUD THAT LIFTED and THE POWER OF THE DEAD 7*s.* 6*d. net.*
MARY MAGDALENE 2*s. net.*

MARLOWE (Christopher)
THE WORKS. In 6 volumes.
General Editor, R. H. CASE.
THE LIFE OF MARLOWE, by C. F. TUCKER BROOKE, and DIDO. Edited by the Same. 8*s.* 6*d. net.*
TAMBURLAINE, I AND II. Edited by U. M. ELLIS-FERMOR. 10*s.*6*d. net.*
THE JEW OF MALTA and THE MASSACRE AT PARIS
Edited by H. S. BENNETT.
10*s.* 6*d. net.*
POEMS
Edited by L. C. MARTIN.
10*s.* 6*d. net.*
DOCTOR FAUSTUS
Edited by F. S. BOAS. 8*s.* 6*d. net.*

MASEFIELD (John)

ON THE SPANISH MAIN 8s. 6d. *net.*
A SAILOR'S GARLAND 3s. 6d. *net.*
SEA LIFE IN NELSON'S TIME 7s. 6d. *net.*

METHUEN (Sir A.)

AN ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN VERSE
232*nd Thousand.*
SHAKESPEARE TO HARDY: An Anthology of English Lyrics
28*th Thousand.*
Each, Cloth, 6s. *net.*
Leather, 7s. 6d. *net.*

MILNE (A. A.)

TOAD OF TOAD HALL
A Play founded on Kenneth Grahame's 'The Wind in the Willows.' 5s. *net.*
THOSE WERE THE DAYS: Collected Stories 7s. 6d. *net.*
BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION
NOT THAT IT MATTERS
IF I MAY
THE SUNNY SIDE
THE RED HOUSE MYSTERY
ONCE A WEEK
THE HOLIDAY ROUND
THE DAY'S PLAY
MR. PIM PASSES BY *Each* 3s. 6d. *net.*
WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG
211*th Thousand.*
WINNIE-THE-POOH
126*th Thousand.*
NOW WE ARE SIX
124*th Thousand.*
THE HOUSE AT POOH CORNER
105*th Thousand.*
Each illustrated by E. H. SHEPARD.
7s. 6d. *net. Leather,* 10s. 6d. *net.*
THE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN STORY BOOK. 43*rd Thousand.*
Illustrated by E. H. SHEPARD. 5s. *net.*
THE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN BIRTHDAY BOOK
Illustrated by E. H. SHEPARD. 3s. 6d. *net.*

MILNE (A. A.) and FRASER-SIMSON (H.)

FOURTEEN SONGS FROM 'WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG'
Thirteenth Edition. 7s. 6d. *net.*
TEDDY BEAR AND OTHER SONGS FROM 'WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG' 7s. 6d. *net.*
THE KING'S BREAKFAST
Third Edition. 3s. 6d. *net.*
SONGS FROM 'NOW WE ARE SIX'
Second Edition. 7s. 6d. *net.*
MORE 'VERY YOUNG' SONGS 7s. 6d. *net.*
THE HUMS OF POOH 7s. 6d. *net.*
Words by A. A. MILNE.
Music by H. FRASER-SIMSON.
Decorations by E. H. SHEPARD.

MORTON (H. V.)

THE HEART OF LONDON
Over 33,000 *sold.* 3s. 6d. *net.*
Also with Scissor Cuts by L. HUMMEL. 6s. *net.*
THE SPELL OF LONDON
Over 23,000 *sold.*
THE NIGHTS OF LONDON
Over 14,000 *sold. Each* 3s. 6d. *net.*
IN SEARCH OF ENGLAND
Over 84,000 *sold.*
THE CALL OF ENGLAND
Over 32,000 *sold.*
IN SEARCH OF SCOTLAND
Over 108,000 *sold.*
IN SEARCH OF IRELAND
Over 42,000 *sold.*
Each illustrated. 7s. 6d. *net.*

OMAN (Sir Charles)

A HISTORY OF THE ART OF WAR IN THE MIDDLE AGES, A.D. 378–1485
2 vols. Illustrated. £1 16s. *net.*
STUDIES IN THE NAPOLEONIC WARS 8s. 6d. *net.*

PERRY (W. J.)

THE ORIGIN OF MAGIC AND RELIGION
THE GROWTH OF CIVILIZATION
Each 6s. *net.*
THE CHILDREN OF THE SUN £1 1s. *net.*

PETRIE (Sir Flinders)

A HISTORY OF EGYPT
In 6 Volumes.
Vol. I. FROM THE 1ST TO THE XVIITH DYNASTY
Eleventh Edition, Revised. 12s. *net.*
Vol. II. THE XVIITH AND XVIIITH DYNASTIES
Seventh Edition, Revised. 9s. *net.*
Vol. III. XIXTH TO XXXTH DYNASTIES
Third Edition. 12s. *net.*
Vol. IV. EGYPT UNDER THE PTOLEMAIC DYNASTY
By EDWYN BEVAN. 15s. *net.*
Vol. V. EGYPT UNDER ROMAN RULE
By J. G. MILNE.
Third Edition, Revised. 12s. *net.*
Vol. VI. EGYPT IN THE MIDDLE AGES
By STANLEY LANE POOLE.
Fourth Edition. 10s. *net.*

PONSONBY OF SHULBREDE (Lord)
ENGLISH DIARIES £1 1s. *net.*
MORE ENGLISH DIARIES 12s. 6d. *net.*
SCOTTISH AND IRISH DIARIES 10s. 6d. *net.*

SELLAR (W. C.) and YEATMAN (R. J.)
1066 AND ALL THAT
Illustrated by JOHN REYNOLDS.
Over 71,000 *sold.* 5s. *net.*

STEVENSON (R. L.)
THE LETTERS Edited by Sir SIDNEY COLVIN. 4 Vols. *Each* 6s. *net.*

STOW (G. W.) and BLEEK (Dorothea F.)
ROCK PAINTINGS IN SOUTH AFRICA
Illustrated. £2 2s. *net.*

SURTEES (R. S.)
HANDLEY CROSS
MR. SPONGE'S SPORTING TOUR
ASK MAMMA
MR. FACEY ROMFORD'S HOUNDS
PLAIN OR RINGLETS?
HILLINGDON HALL
Each illustrated. 7s. 6d. *net.*
JORROCKS'S JAUNTS AND JOLLITIES
HAWBUCK GRANGE
Each illustrated. 6s. *net.*

TAYLOR (A. E.)
PLATO: THE MAN AND HIS WORK £1 1s. *net.*
PLATO: TIMÆUS AND CRITIAS 6s. *net.*
ELEMENTS OF METAPHYSICS 12s. 6d. *net.*

TILDEN (William T.)
THE ART OF LAWN TENNIS *Revised Edition.*
SINGLES AND DOUBLES
Each illustrated. 6s. *net.*
THE COMMON SENSE OF LAWN TENNIS
MATCH PLAY AND THE SPIN OF THE BALL
Each illustrated. 5s. *net.*

TILESTON (Mary W.)
DAILY STRENGTH FOR DAILY NEEDS
Thirty-fourth Edition. 3s. 6d. *net.*
India Paper. *Leather,* 6s. *net.*

TRAPP (Oswald Graf)
THE ARMOURY OF THE CASTLE OF CHURBURG
Translated by J. G. MANN.
Richly illustrated.
Limited to 400 copies.
£4 14s. 6d. *net.*

UNDERHILL (Evelyn)
MYSTICISM. *Revised Edition.* 15s. *net.*
THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT AND THE LIFE OF TO-DAY 7s. 6d. *net.*
MAN AND THE SUPERNATURAL 7s. 6d. *net.*
CONCERNING THE INNER LIFE 2s. *net.*
THE HOUSE OF THE SOUL 2s. *net.*

VARDON (Harry)
HOW TO PLAY GOLF
Illustrated. *Nineteenth Edition.* 5s. *net.*

WELD-BLUNDELL (Dom B.)
SELF-DISCIPLINE AND HOLINESS 5s. *net.*

WILDE (Oscar)
THE WORKS
In 16 Vols. *Each* 6s. 6d. *net.*
I. LORD ARTHUR SAVILE'S CRIME AND THE PORTRAIT OF MR. W. H.
II. THE DUCHESS OF PADUA
III. POEMS
IV. LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN
V. A WOMAN OF NO IMPORTANCE
VI. AN IDEAL HUSBAND
VII. THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
VIII. A HOUSE OF POMEGRANATES
IX. INTENTIONS
X. DE PROFUNDIS AND PRISON LETTERS
XI. ESSAYS
XII. SALOMÉ, A FLORENTINE TRAGEDY, and LA SAINTE COURTISANE
XIV. SELECTED PROSE OF OSCAR WILDE
XV. ART AND DECORATION
XVI. FOR LOVE OF THE KING 5s. *net.*
XVII. VERA, OR THE NIHILISTS

WILLIAMSON (G. C.)
THE BOOK OF FAMILLE ROSE
Richly Illustrated. £8 8s. *net.*

MAY 2 0 2015

MAY 1 5 2015

945.5 B77
Brinton, Selwyn,
Golden age of the M>< 1434-1494
MT. MARY COLL. ocm00405571
3 8920 99013871 6